

AN OLD FRIEND

WITH

A NEW FACE:

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. PARSONS.

VOL. III.

" Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot;
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As *friend* remembered not."

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1797.



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A NEW PAGE

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There, from the first day
I traced her life in days
As I remember
Through those long, long ways
The long, long days
As I have remembered her

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AN OLD FRIEND

WITH

A NEW FACE.

“AND now, Madame,” continued the old gentleman, “I shall soon hasten to the melancholy catastrophe of my story; I fear my prolixity has tired you, forgive me, 'tis long since that I have had an opportunity to talk over my sorrows: every word I have written down; every syllable is engraven on my heart, and familiar to my memory, as if they were the events of yesterday.

“I pass over our journey; we alighted at my grandfather's seat, twelve leagues from Paris, having parted some hours before with our friendly Bruyere. As I led Clara up the avenue, her limbs trembled, nor were mine quite steady, though I believed it impossible to view her without admiration. At the entrance, Monsieur

Poissy went before us; he returned with my mother, he presented the trembling Clara, and never did she look more interestingly beautiful: my mother seemed surprised I thought, but welcomed her more cordially than I expected; I knelt with transport, and acknowledged her goodness: she embraced me with tenderness and emotion. We proceeded to the saloon, my mother presented Miss Beaufort to my grandfather; he did not look with quite so much complacency as my mother had done; he was, however, tolerably polite, and, upon the whole, received us better than I expected.

“It was before dinner that we arrived, and the Marquis told us, a neighbouring gentleman or two were expected to supper who would be glad to see me.

“My mother, turning to Clara, said, ‘Possibly, Mademoiselle, company may be rather fatiguing after your journey; use your own pleasure, your apartment will be ready whenever you chuse to retire. The dear, amiable, unsuspecting girl



girl seemed pleased with this attention, and owned she would rather be excused that evening from seeing strangers.

"The afternoon passed tolerably; the Marquis seemed to relax a little, my mother spoke kindly to us all, and when the company were announced, and Clara rose to retire, she accompanied her. On leaving the room her last look was thrown upon me, and I felt a shuddering at my heart that seemed wholly unaccountable, and from which I scarcely recovered to receive the compliments of the gentlemen.

"My mother was absent some time; I anxiously watched for her return, yet was pleased that she attended Clara, certain that the dear girl could not fail of making for herself an interest in the affections of those she wished to please. At length she returned---Good God! never shall I forget the indescribable emotions I felt on observing her.

"She was pale as death, every limb seemed agitated, and when she met my eyes, her's were cast down in confusion.

I drew near to her, 'Dear Madame, what has happened, how is Clara?' 'Happened!' repeated she, 'what should have happened? I left Miss Beaufort in safe hands; I have been a little affected by *her* emotions, but I left her perfectly quiet.' O this insidious equivocating speech, how could I be deceived by it! Alas! it came from a mother who had fondly loved me, and whom I believed incapable of duplicity.

"I passed a dull evening; our company took an early leave, and I retired to bed; but though fatigued in body, I could enjoy no rest. I was anxious to know if Clara was satisfied with the reception she had met with, and not less to learn the opinion of my friends respecting her. I dropt into several short and unrefreshing slumbers, from which I started continually, overcome with terror, from some fancied ill that hung upon my spirits.

"The moment that day appeared, I threw myself out of bed, and wandered into the garden, where I continued 'till
sum-

summoned to breakfast; lost in thought, I heeded not the passing hours, and was surprised to find it so late.

"I entered the room with eager steps, looking round in vain to see my adored Clara; before I could ask for her, my mother said, 'Miss Beaufort not being quite prepared for breakfast, I persuaded her to take it in her own apartment.' I felt my heart die within me, yet I knew not why, for who would have doubted the truth and sincerity of an affectionate parent!

"Monsieur Poiffy seized the opportunity to speak of Clara as the most perfect character he had ever known, as a young woman whose principles would do honour to any rank or situation in life. My friends listened with attention, but said little; when our repast was over, my grandfather invited him into his study, my mother hastily withdrew; and being alone, I grew impatient for the entrance of Clara, not daring to use the privilege allowed in French families, of attending her toilet.

"I was sitting in a window, earnestly watching the door, when I heard voices as if raised high in anger, and presently Poissy burst into the room, greatly agitated and followed by the Marquis—the former ran and caught hold of my arm; 'my dear Count we have been deceived, and Clara is cruelly betrayed—she is carried off by an order from the King!' I heard no more, every sense was for a moment suspended—I distinguished their voices, but their words died on my ear; but alas! I too soon recovered to know the full extent of my misery.

"The moment Poissy had roused me from this stupefaction, I went up to my grandfather, and in a distracted manner demanded Clara, bid any one detain her from me at their peril—in short I spoke incoherent madness.

'Rash fool!' said the Marquis, with a determined ferocity of countenance; 'know that the object of your weak passion was carried off last night, and is now beyond all possibility of pursuit; you will see
her

her no more, and some time hence, will have gratitude enough to value the service we have done you, in preserving you from disgrace and eternal regret.'

"I heard him with surprizing steadiness—a kind of resigned despair—'and you, Sir,' I replied, 'how will you congratulate yourself, on the basest deceit, the most cruel and unjust persecution of a young woman, far, far your superior in every virtue that dignifies human nature? How will *you* answer in the day of judgement for driving *me* to despair and death, and destroying the happiness, and life of an unfortunate amiable creature, under a deception, so vile, as only the most diabolical pride, the most savage heart, could have conceived, and executed?'

"I turned to Poissy, regardless of the rage that worked every muscle in the face of the Marquis—'O, my friend, what may not that angelic girl suffer, let us fly to find, to rescue her, no corner on earth shall escape my search.'

‘ Yes,’ said he, embracing me, ‘ the duplicity that has wounded you, equally interests me, and never will I forsake you.’

‘ My Lord’ added he, addressing the Marquis, ‘ you have basely dishonoured me, you have made me an accomplice in *your* crime, by fixing on me, as the instrument to deceive unsuspecting innocence, and deliver the fairest work in the creation into your power, under such deceptive appearances, as ought to cover you with confusion and self-reproach.

‘ That amiable betrayed young woman never would have consented to marry the Count, had you not perfidiously given your consent—we leave you, my Lord, to reflection—henceforth I devote my life and fortune, to recover the angel you have stolen from us, and to unite her to the Count, if she will *condescend*, after your base treatment, to accept of him.’

“ He might have talked on without interruption; the rage that overpowered the Marquis, rendered him incapable of speaking.

ing, and I stood by with a savage pleasure enjoying his distress, and my mind so distracted in forming different plans, that I appeared a mere automaton, at the command of Poissy.

"He now dragged me out of the room, 'My dear Count, rouse yourself into action, shake off this stupifying horror; let us examine the servants, and then set off in pursuit of your lost Clara.'

"That name so dear, effectually animated me, we flew about the house, enquiring particulars of every one, all we could learn, was simply this:—

"That orders were given to the servants, when we arrived, not to take the baggage up stairs; and in the evening, when my mother accompanied the deluded victim up stairs, the chamber maid was dismissed; in a few minutes after, three men entered from the back court, whom my mother met in the passage; one of the servants heard her say, 'all is ready, follow me.' They ascended the stairs, she ordered the servants to remain in the kitchen; curiosity

made

made them listen, they heard some bustle, and a faint voice, that seemed to be stopt from screaming; presently after which, the chamber maid, who had been in an adjoining apartment, ran into the kitchen in a great fright—"ah!" said she, "three king's officers have carried off the young lady: God knows where, I could not hear much, only the poor thing struggled a little, but was soon quiet—they went down the back stairs, for I looked out of the window, and saw them carrying her among them, like a dead body—mercy upon us, don't say a word, because my lady did not know I was in the next room—but I heard her tell the lady, it was by order of the King."

"The servant who gave us this information, added, that her two trunks were taken away from the passage, they knew not by whom.

"Judge Madame what I felt, but no, 'tis impossible, even now I feel horror at the recollection of my state of mind; we ordered horses instantly, my mother sent me

a note,

a note, I looked over it, tore it in pieces, and bid the servant tell her, 'she had no longer a son:' she had written in the most tender terms, conjuring me to forgive a necessity, and requesting I would not forget I had a mother—I could only remember it with bitterness; we left orders for our own servant to follow us with our trunks, to Paris.

"We set off full speed, making enquiries of every person, and in every probable place; alas! not the smallest ray of light appeared to guide our search; we had no doubt but that she was carried to a convent, and resolved to visit every one in the kingdom. The distraction of my mind, no language can express; my friend was not less zealous than myself.

"Never would I," said he, "have accorded to your wishes, had you desired to have married clandestinely; never would I have undertaken your cause, but from the noble self-denial of Clara. Had they openly, and candidly refused their consent, that generous maid would have died sooner than

than have acted contrary to their wishes; but thus basely to deceive, and draw her into their power, to tyrannize over a worthy unprotected young woman, such cruel deceitful proceeding, dissolves all ties of duty and gratitude—your cause is now mine.’

“ We visited every convent in Paris, to no effect; I wrote once to my mother, telling her, ‘ that unless Clara was restored to me, she would see me no more; that if affection and justice, should at any time operate in her mind, she might write to my friend Bruyere, who would always know our route.’

“ That worthy young man was not less shocked at such proceedings, than Monsieur Poissy, he engaged to spare no pains to gain us intelligence of the poor sufferer, if money or friends could do it.

“ Three years were actually spent, in running over every part of the kingdom, not a convent, nor the smallest village escaped us; in large towns and cities, we resided some time always, exploring every
proba-

probable secret confinement—all was fruitless.

“ Hope and expectation, no longer supported my spirits, my constitution sunk under the conflicts and disorder of my mind; for some weeks, my best of friends daily expected an end to my existence; he wrote to my natural friends, conjuring them to spare themselves much future anguish, by liberating the amiable and innocent girl, whose presence alone could save my life, if, indeed, that act of justice would not arrive too late.

“ No answers were returned, and their stern inflexibility could not be moved, even to preserve the life of an only son; pride and ambition superseded the ties of nature, and swallowed up every endearing claim between a parent and a child!

“ Unexpectedly my disorder came to a crisis, an abscess formed in my side by grief and agitation, broke in the critical moment, when life seemed preparing to quit its earthly tenement; and from that hour,

hour, I slowly recovered, though it was a work of some months; during which I heard from Bruyere, that himself and his family, had severally addressed my grandfather, and entreated him to relax from the severity of his proceedings.

“His answer at once annihilated every hope, he had not taken up his resolution lightly, but would a thousand times sooner hear of my death, than that I should live to disgrace my family by a shameful marriage with an indigent, obscure English girl, whose consummate art, and pretty face, had made fools of both Poissy and me.

“He solemnly swore, never to release Clara, until I returned to my family, and by a splendid marriage which he had in view for me, rendered the artful and ambitious designs of that girl abortive. On no other terms would my mother, or himself, ever see me more.

“Such was the cruel and decided answer given to my friends; and after three years lingering in France, I complied with the

the wishes of my unwearied friend Poissy, and accompanied him to Lisbon, where he had a brother.

“But in a very few months I was tired of every thing there, my heart invariably turned towards France, and my good Poissy readily returned with me.

“I went to my own estate for a short time; Bruyere, who had long been happily married, had entered into the army, and was the father of a fine boy, (here Madame Bruyere could not suppress a deep sigh) came to visit me; he assured me, that he had never relaxed in his endeavours to serve me, and to discover the prison of Clara, though without success, and advised me as a last forlorn hope, to throw myself at the feet of the King, and implore his compassion and interference with the Marquis.

“I consented immediately; the Court was at Paris; my two friends accompanied me: I drew up a memorial, which was presented by Bruyere to his Majesty, and the following day I appeared and knelt with

with a beating heart for a sentence on which depended more than life to me.

‘Rife Count,’ said he coldly, ‘I am sorry you ask what I have no power to grant; my word is already pledged to the Marquis your grandfather; the rights of parents are too sacred for my interference, and to preserve you from a disgraceful, and unequal alliance, is no less *my* duty than *theirs*, to whom you owe implicit obedience.’

“I made my bow in silent agony, and left the presence directly. My friends followed, they could offer no consolation, and Bruyere reluctantly quitted me the following day.

“Once more I over-ran the kingdom in a fruitless search; at length convinced that my cruel relations must have destroyed her, I gave myself up to the most frightful despair, and more than once meditated killing myself in their presence. Poissy saw, and pitied all my frantic designs, by his gentleness I was preserved from many crimes

crimes my gloomy mind meditated; and I was prevailed upon to leave my own house, and retire with him to Befançon.

“ There we lived five years, still renewing our search and enquiries very frequently, ’till a new misfortune befel me, in the death of my best and truest friend; this was a bitter stroke, I was now thrown on the world without a friend or comforter.

“ I have forgotten to tell you, that during my residence with my dear Poissy, we heard from Bruyere, that my grandfather was dead, had left his fortune to my mother, who in a few months after had married the Marquis De Pontac.

“ When the tumults of my grief, for the loss of my friend, were a little abated, I determined once more to address my mother, who in the possession of all her father’s fortune, and being again married, might possibly be more indifferent to my connexion, and more relaxed towards Clara, *if she yet existed.*

“ I wrote, and an answer arrived; though
I hoped,

I hoped, I did not expect it, and was most exceedingly agitated when I tore it open—these were nearly the words:—‘When you learn that Clara Beaufort, is now Sister Agness, in the Convent St. Mary Magdalane, at Salines, I hope you will remember she is dead to you; if you can approach me with that *love* and *reverence*, due from a son to a mother, I shall be happy to see you—on those terms *only*, my husband, the Marquis De Pontac, is ready to embrace you.’

“Such were the dreadful contents of this letter, and I have often wondered I did not expire in perusing it, but my heart was made to suffer, and was too tough to break. The moment I could recover strength of mind, and steady limbs, I set out for Salines, and hastened to the convent; I asked of the portress for Sister Agness—she started, and crossing herself—‘ah! good God!’ said she, ‘her pure soul is in heaven—she died three weeks ago.’

“I fell down that instant senseless, an alarm

alarm was given, and I was taken into a small building on the outside of the convent; when life returned, and too soon it did return, I desired to be conveyed home; enquiring who was the Father Confessor to the convent, I sent for him; the poor man was shocked to see the state in which I lay.

“ I enquired if Sister Agneſs was really dead, he confirmed the fatal truth, and asking my name, no ſooner heard it, than he very frankly let me into the whole dreadful ſtory; for before her profeſſion, which had taken place but eight months previous to her death, ſhe revealed to this good Father her whole melancholy hiſtory.

“ She had been brought to this convent, at the extremity of the kingdom, with an order from the King, ſufficiently ſtrong to preclude any enquiries from being ſucceſſful; (for in my reſearches, I had been three times at this convent) here the dear unfortunate Clara languished a victim to arbitrary power, and unjuſt perſecution. From the firſt of her entrance, ſhe was

given to understand she must take the veil; this she resisted firmly for several years, in the delusive hope that I might discover her prison.

“ But months and years passing away in fruitless expectation, despair and sorrow at length preyed upon her health, and she fell into a gradual decay. Sensible of the state she was in, she gave up all worldly hopes, and devoted herself to the duties of religion. Of her own accord she desired to take the veil; the Abbess, who saw her sinking to the grave, felt compassion for her situation, and would have refused her, but she persevered in her request, and was indulged in it.

“ From that hour,” continued the good Father, “ she lived like a saint indeed, not a sigh or complaint escaped her, she bore all the fatigues of her office without a murmur. At length she took to her bed, her behaviour, her devout resignation, edified the whole convent, she forgave, and prayed for her persecutors; she blessed the Count de Vassy, and his good friend,
and

and prayed that their last hours might be as happy and composed as hers. The last three days were given solely to her God, and her angelic spirit fled to heaven !!!

“Do you not wonder, Madame, that I survived this relation, ah! death would have been a blessing, but I was so inured to sorrow, my heart so callous and hardened by grief, that though every limb trembled, and the most oppressive sighs overcharged my bosom; though I neither partook of rest, nor food for several days and nights, yet still I lived to mourn, and be a wretch for ever.

“My resolution was now taken to leave the world, I refused to enter into a monastery, for there was society, but I determined not to quit this spot that contained the ashes of my beloved, sainted Clara; I took a survey of this mountain, from tales I had heard of the cavern—I found this hermitage, then in a very ruinous state; I repaired it a little, merely to make it habitable, and took up my abode in it, unmolested, for several years.

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"I disposed of all my effects, the money I divided between the convent, and the monastery of the good Father, that long attended, and soothed my sorrows; conditionally, that the former had a weekly mass for the soul of my divine Clara; and that the latter should permit me to be buried in their dormitory, that my ashes, when the blessed hour arrives to free my spirit from this bodily clay, may not be far distant from my sainted maid's.

"Both requisitions were engaged to be complied with; twice a week, one or other of the good Fathers attend me with food, and watch over my health; very few words ever pass between us; they would think it criminal to hear me talk of love and Clara, and I can think of nothing else.

"My residence in this hermitage, after many years, was disturbed by a man, who said he daily expected his master to take possession of an estate at the foot of the mountain, and who he was sure would be delighted with the hermitage.

"This was enough for me, I had often
gone

gone down into the cavern, and had seen several little platforms that might be made habitable. With the assistance of my friends, the monks, I had every necessary for my convenience carried there; and there I have resided some time, seldom going out but in the evening. The gentleman who was expected has taken notice of it, and greatly improved its natural beauties; he has often brought company here, which, Madame, induced me to caution *you*, that if you sought concealment, *here* you could not be secure from a discovery.

“And now, having fatigued you as well as myself, I have concluded my melancholy and too prolix story; excuse the garrulity of age, and the delight I feel in talking of my ever-dear, lamented, but now *happy* Clara.”

Madame Bruyere, who had listened with attention and sympathy to this melancholy narrative, assured him, that she participated in his sorrows. “The heads of your story, Sir,” said she, “were not unknown

to me, though the most interesting parts were, such as *you* only could reveal: alas, Sir! you see before you a being not less unhappy than yourself, my name Bruyere, wife to that son of your old friend and relation, who died when he was young, and left him in the care of his uncle."

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed the Count, "is it possible? the family of my Bruyere too, unfortunate! Ah! Madame, deign to inform me of your situation, helpless as I am, 'tis probable my knowledge of this country may enable me to hold out some relief."

"No," replied Madame, "No, Sir, my misfortunes admit of no alleviation, they are past hope, past cure. 'Tis now too late to enter on my story, but if you will visit me in the morning I will have no reserves to you. I am not apprehensive of any interruption from the gentleman you have alluded to, though I am preparing for my departure in a day or two."

The Count viewed her with the tender-

est

est concern, but his long narrative had broken in far upon the evening, and therefore taking an affectionate and respectful leave, he withdrew.

Philip was highly delighted when he saw him quit the hermitage—"I thought," said he, entering, "the old man would have tarried with you all night: Lord, Madame, how could you be plagued with his company so many hours?" "You know not, Philip," replied she, "that this old man you speak so contemptuously of, is not unknown to you, that he was the dear friend of your old master, and travelled with you from England—do you recollect the Count De Vassy?"

"Good Lord!" cried he, "why sure this old man can never be that handsome, genteel, sprightly gentleman, that lived with us in London?" "The same," she replied: "Ah! my friend, affliction soon nips the bloom of youth, and when years are added to a life of sorrow, few traits of former graces can be expected to remain."

"Indeed," returned he, "I now remember to have heard he was disappointed in marrying the beautiful young woman we brought over, and I know my good master was troubled about him, but 'tis so many years since, that I should never have known him, or thought of his name."

It was late, the children were retired to rest, and Madame Bruyere dismissing Philip, prepared to try her chance for repose, though with small hopes of tasting that "balmy restorer, sleep."

Early the following day the Count returned, extremely impatient to hear the story of Madame, which she communicated as briefly as possible; not feeling the satisfaction in repeating *her* distresses, which had induced the Count to be so prolix.

He heard her with an equal portion of sorrow and agitation; he started up more than once, crying out, "The villain! O, that I could recal a few years, and had strength

strength to punish such a vile miscreant !”

When she concluded with declaring her intention of going to Lisbon, he said, “ Heaven, my dear Madame, has conducted this meeting between us ; it was the hand of Providence, to give me an opportunity of serving the family of my dear Bruyere. You may remember, I told you that I accompanied my dear Poissy to Lisbon, where he had a brother. On the death of my friend, I had the charge of securing his effects for his family ; several letters passed between us, and though ’tis now two-and-twenty years since, I have no doubt some of the family are living : Donna Violante, Monsieur Poissy’s lady, was then but nineteen ; she had two little cherubs.

“ I am persuaded,” continued he, “ that if the family are in being, they will pay you every attention ; ’tis at least worth the trial, I will write, and I feel a presentiment that you will meet with a valuable acquaintance.”

“Alas ! my dear Sir,” answered she, “you see my weak state of health, sinking under mental distresses, impossible to be remedied ; ’tis not acquaintance I go in search of, ’tis to draw my last breath in the same country that holds the ashes of my beloved much-injured Bruyere.

“I have no hopes of his existence in that dreadful abyfs where he was plunged by the vilest of men. My children, indeed!—*there* is the tie that drags me back to earth, when my soul would wish to take its flight ; *they* may want a friend——A friend ! my God ! how is that sacred name profaned ! their dear father sought a friend, but ingratitude, that most detestable of all vices, the offspring of a corrupt heart, laid its cruel fangs upon him, and has overwhelmed us all in endless misery !”

The Count was greatly affected, the sorrows of Madame Bruyere recalled all his own afflictions fresh to his memory ; similar misfortunes taught him to feel for her ; he well knew the pangs, the exquisite pain that seizes on a virtuous
and

and susceptible heart, when feeling for the wrongs and distresses of a dearly beloved object: he struggled, however, to forget himself, and to fortify her mind to bear the woes that oppressed her, for the sake of her children; and again hoped that some of his friend Poissy's family would prove of service to her.

To divert her attention for a few moments, he mentioned the extraordinary cavern in which he resided; the natural platforms that were in it, and might serve for different apartments—"I have two," said he, "really comfortable, and am so content with them, that I shall never resume my situation in this hermitage, were it even abandoned entirely by the Marquis."

She observed, that he had mentioned to her, on their visiting this spot, that the peasantry were terrified by traditional stories of strange noises proceeding from the Cavern.

"Its amazing extent I have never yet explored," answered the Count, "but I have

have great reason to believe it has been formerly an asylum for unfortunate persons in times of persecution, who possibly were interested in making such noises to evade curiosity and discovery. The monks have told me some of the passages extend under the castle, if not quite on to Salines; I have seen many platforms or apartments that retain the appearance of having formerly had fire-places.

"But, my dear Madame, to speak of what is much more interesting to you, when is it you intend leaving this spot?"

"I think," answered she, sighing, "I shall begin my melancholy journey the day after to-morrow; I am as well in health as I can expect to be, and having no longer any apprehensions of being pursued or detained, I am impatient to be gone."

"Then," returned he, "I will employ myself in the morning with my pen, and visit you in the evening. You must see that I am not selfish, otherwise I might be induced to entreat you would remain some
time

time longer here, but however desirable your society must be to me, I cannot bear those sweet children should lose the advantages of education, so requisite at their time of life; and should my wishes to serve you in the family of my friend, prove fruitless, I would advise you to enquire out for some good father of reputation, and take his opinion for placing them in a proper situation."

She thanked him for his advice, and assured him she would do so, if it pleased Heaven to spare her life.

After he had left her, she consulted with Philip by what means the good cottager who had sheltered him, could be benefited by the things she intended for him; she thought to give the Count his choice of any necessaries that might be useful; for in the uncertainty how long she must have remained there, Philip had not been sparing in procuring all the conveniencies in his power.

Philip proposed going the following day, still in the disguise of a wood-cutter, to

Salines, there to hire carriages, and bring the cottager with him, that he might be informed of her generous intentions, see those things he was to have, and also be useful to remove what little baggage she had to his cot, ready to be placed in the carriages.

This plan settled, Madame Bruyere grew more composed, it was necessary now to collect fortitude, and arm herself with resolution to bear the fatigues, perhaps difficulties and disappointments, consequent to her journey. She left nothing to regret, but fled from every thing that was detestable and horrid to her remembrance; she had no hope to cheer her, no felicity to expect from change of residence, but she panted to live, to die, in the same spot where her much injured husband had met his fate; and that melancholy satisfaction was the height of her wishes.

She had been fully employed all the morning, when the Count came to visit her, and brought the letters which he hoped she might derive some advantage from.

from. "Ah! Count," said she suddenly, "I wish you were to accompany me." "O, impossible!" replied he, "never will I forsake this neighbourhood consecrated by the death of an angel; that my ashes will be deposited within a few yards from the sacred spot that contains hers, is the only consolation that cheers my melancholy hours. In the sweet hope of being reunited, I count the passing moments with delight, that each day brings the inevitable, and by me, much desired hour, nearer at hand."

He could say no more, their situations, their feelings were but too similar, and she acknowledged the ties that held him there, were too sacred to be broken.

She profited much, however, by his knowledge of the road to the proper sea-port for her to embark with her family, and save much tedious and expensive travelling: he also instructed her how to act on her arrival, and the methods she must take for their accommodation.

Upon the whole, she had abundant cause

to be grateful to Providence for this meeting likely to prove so beneficial to her, perfectly unacquainted as she was with the society and manners of the people she was going among.

Nothing intervened to impede her intended journey; through the active kindness of the Count, and the services of the cottager, all things were perfectly well regulated, and after dividing her few articles of accommodation to the satisfaction of the Count, and the thankful joy of the peasant, she took an affectionate leave of the former, an everlasting one, they both called it in this life, and with her dear children, Janette, and the faithful Philip, she proceeded on her journey to Lisbon.

Coming down the mountain, the castle met her eye; she shuddered—"There," said she, mentally, "*there* is the grave of my happiness, innocence, and self-content; *there* resides the wretch, the cruel spoiler, who trampled on every sacred duty, and completed the destruction of his friend! Oh! base, treacherous man! in the day
of

of retribution, how great will be thy condemnation !”

She turned her eye from an object that shocked every sense of feeling, and imploring the protection of Heaven for her persecuted family, sad and spiritless, she turned her back on the detested castle, and pursued her journey.

“ He who approaches the unfortunate,
“ without feeling a sensation of mingled fear and deference, is neither
“ formed to relieve, nor worthy to
“ console them.”

It is by no means our intention to follow Madame Bruyere through her tedious and fatiguing journey ; suffice it to say, that she bore every inconvenience with patience and fortitude, and was at length safely landed on the banks of the Tagus ; her mind so absorbed in the idea of her husband's sufferings in that most cruel of all prisons, established by the most furious bigots that persecuting zeal ever influenced,

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the

the Inquisition:—That all the beauties presented to her eyes on sailing up the river, were lost in the contemplation of her unparalleled wretchedness.

The children, unconscious of the cause that distressed their dear mamma, were delighted beyond measure, and congratulated each other on the pleasures that they should enjoy in such a sweet place.

On their landing, Madame followed the instructions given to her by the Count, and was soon conducted to a house of entertainment, where fortunately the master of it understood and spoke the French language extremely well.

The very next day she was taken ill; the agitations of her mind now overcame every exertion of strength she had struggled to preserve, and her forlorn situation pressed upon her spirits, till they sunk under the conflict. Her fever encreased, she grew light-headed; the children were for ever on their knees in tears, Philip and Janette almost distracted.

A physician was sent for, he pronounced
her

her in danger; seeing only children and domestics, he enquired who the lady was, where she came from, and who were her friends or acquaintance in Lisbon?

"Alas! Sir," answered Philip, "my lady came from France; she has no friend here, we are all totally unknown." "Very strange that!" said the Doctor; "no doubt the lady came here on business, she must have some recommendations, a woman would never undertake a voyage here unknowing and unknown." That moment Philip recollected the letters given to Madame by the Count de Vaffy.

"Yes," said he, briskly, "my lady has letters; they are in a small case, I believe, in her pocket." "By all means let us see them," returned the physician; "the lady's situation calls for the attention of friends, and therefore well warrants the liberty of sending them to those they are intended for."

Janette produced the pockets of her lady, the case was found, opened, and the letters taken out; one was addressed to

"Donna

"Donna Violante de Poissy," the other to the "Count de Sylves."

"Ah!" said the physician, pleasure in his looks, "I know both families exceeding well, and more worthy ones do not exist.—The lady lives very near, I will take the letter myself; the Count is her brother. Fear not, my friend," added he, to Philip, who looked hesitating and uneasy, "fear not, the present exigence justifies our proceedings; I will take all the blame to myself."

He left the house in haste; Philip was very unhappy; he feared, indeed, that the sorrows of his dear lady were now about to terminate, and that her children would be left, in a strange land, without a friend but himself to protect them.—"And I am old," cried he, brushing off the falling tears, "without a home, and with but little power to assist them; yet the life that Heaven spares me shall be devoted to them."

Madame Bruyere, unconscious of her situation, was distracted by scenes of former

mer misery; she raved on her husband, entreated him not to leave her, then screamed, and implored protection from the Marquis, who had murdered her husband and children! All those dreadful visions floating on her brain, encreased her fever to the most alarming degree.

Philip was on his knees in a corner of the room, the children hung about the bed, and poor Janette was holding the hands of her mistress, the big tears dropping on them as she leant over her.—Such was the scene that presented itself to the view of two ladies, ushered in by the physician; Philip started from the floor, joy at seeing them almost turned *his* brain, from the sudden transition——“O, save her, save her!” cried he, clasping his hands in the most earnest manner; “the dearest worthies——” he could say no more, tears gushed from his eyes, and his emotions choaked his utterance.

“Faithful, affectionate creature!” said one of the ladies, “compose yourself, Heaven will, I hope, restore her; be assured

fured your lady has friends, who will exert their utmost to save her life." While she was speaking, the doctor had been attending to his patient, and the younger lady had drawn off the two weeping children from the bed—"Cease to afflict yourselves, my charming creatures," said she, "your mamma will soon be well."

Some medicines were now given of the most powerful nature, and such as the extremity of the case demanded; the physician almost trembled for the effect, but he knew there was no time to be lost from the appearance of the disorder. The ladies seemed uncommonly interested; and, as it was impossible to remove her, the elder lady declared she would stay and wait the event, requesting the young one to take the children home with her.

It was no easy task to persuade Henry and his sister to leave their mamma, and go with strangers; Philip was called to add his persuasions, and assurances that they should return again in the evening, when he would fetch them, and their
mamma

mamma would be better. Accustomed to respect him, they reluctantly complied, and were taken by the young lady, in a carriage, to the house of Donna Violante.

This lady, to whom the physician hastened with the letters, had been a widow near four years; a son and a daughter, who were her two eldest, only remained to her out of six children. The son was in the army of his sovereign, having chosen a military life; not quite accordant with his parents wishes, but they were too fond of him to enforce obedience, against a declared inclination, that would cost him much to give up, but which they well knew he would have done, had they expressly desired it.

His conduct justified their indulgence, and the reputation he had acquired when only nineteen, deservedly engaged to him universal esteem.

Donna Maria, the daughter, was now five-and-twenty; she had refused several advantageous offers, from a perfect indifference to all the men she had ever seen,
and

and a strong affection for her mother, whose society she could not be persuaded to resign, without feeling any preference in favour of an object to whom, if married, she must devote the chief of her attentions.

Monfieur de Poiffy was born in France, and heir to a handsome fortune. A brother of his mother, who was a native of Portugal, residing in Lisbon, died a bachelor, leaving a large property to his eldest nephew, conditionally, that he should reside in Lisbon, where his estates lay.

Having before lost both his parents, he accepted of the conditions; and three years after his arrival, married Donna Violante de Sylves. They tasted all the sweets of a happy union, undisturbed but by the death of four children at different ages: de Poiffy constantly corresponded with his younger brother, and even offered him a handsome addition to his moderate fortune; but the other, without pride or ambition, was content to enjoy his own little

little independence, free from obligation, and with a heart at ease.

He had often been earnestly pressed to pay a visit to them at Lisbon, which he had as constantly declined, till the misfortunes and melancholy of his young friend, the Count de Vassy, induced him to think that company, the salubrity of the air, and the attentions of his brother's family, might have a happy effect upon the disorder of his mind.

They were received with every degree of affection and respect; the sensibility of de Poissy and his lady was deeply engaged for the unfortunate Count; they were charmed with the amiableness of his temper and manners, and exerted every effort to remove the deep melancholy that pervaded his mind. He was grateful, but no more: and we have already heard, that he grew restless and unhappy, until his friend returned with him to France.

The family in Lisbon keeping up a correspondence with their brother, were always interested for his unhappy friend,
and

and on the death of that brother, had several times pressed the Count to visit them once more; but the fatal discovery his mother had too late made, of the cruel fate which her unpardonable pride had brought upon the innocent and unhappy Clara, so entirely engaged every faculty of his soul, that from the hour her death was announced to him, all other friends or attachments were forgotten.

Most fortunately for Madame Bruyere, the repetition of his story had recalled to his mind the kind and unwearied attentions he had received from the family of his friend; and her design of going to Lisbon, gave him an opportunity of acknowledging his sense of their favours, and of soliciting a like kindness for a very amiable and unfortunate lady.

He briefly mentioned the outlines of her story, her persecutions, and the terrible fate of her husband, who must be perfectly innocent of any crime deserving a punishment so severe. Her particular injuries from the Marquis St. Juliers he forbore

bore to relate, leaving that information to her discretion; but he said enough to interest hearts of sensibility like those of Donna Violante and her daughter's; and when those letters were delivered by the physician, and they understood the danger of her situation, they flew on the wings of benevolence to the relief of the unfortunate lady.

Such were the persons tenderly concerned for poor Madame Bruyere, who, from the potent effect of the medicine, lay some hours struggling between life and death, insensible of her disorder, and her hourly-expected dissolution.

The physician waited the event with anxiety, Donna Violante with a trembling, affectionate heart; at length it was perceived she was in a profound sleep, her respiration easy, and the rapid motion of her pulse greatly reduced.

"Heaven be praised!" said the doctor, in a whisper, "my worst fears are over; I have risked something, and have no cause

cause to regret a temerity that has certainly saved the life of my patient."

"What!" cried she, in the same tone, "do you believe she will recover?" "I have no doubt of it," returned he; "and if she continues to rest, I should hope she will awake to life and reason." Those hopes were realized; she slept undisturbed for five hours; and, on waking, her eyes fell on Donna Violante, who was bending over her with looks of tender concern.

"Where am I?" said she, in a faint voice—"Who are you, Madame?" "You are perfectly safe," answered the Donna, pressing her hand, "and with an affectionate friend." "Friend!" repeated she, raising her feeble eyes to heaven, "friends have flinty hearts—I want no friends!" They thought her senses not yet restored to proper calmness, and therefore did not notice her words; but Violante, still holding her hand, said, "I hope you will allow *me* to be such; my name is Violante de Poissy, the honoured correspondent of the Count de Vassy."

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Madame Bruyere tried to raise her head, but was too weak; then drawing the hand that held her's to her lips—"My heart thanks you," said she, "but I cannot find words.—My children, my dear Henry and his sister!"

"Compose yourself, my dear Madame, the sweet creatures are at my house, where I hope you also will be carried in a few hours.—What think you, Sir," added she, to the physician, "may the lady be removed?" "By no means this night, my good Madame, we must proceed cautiously; perhaps to-morrow; but 'tis better to lose a day or two here, than repent the indulgence of an hour, where so much is in the hazard."

"O, certainly," returned she; "we shall take no steps of any kind but with your permission.—I shall order my night-linen, and stay here." "No, no," cried Madame, with quickness, "I cannot, cannot bear it." She appeared so much agitated, that the doctor advised Donna Violante to give up the point, which, with

great reluctance, she assented to, but said, her woman should then attend, otherwise she could not rest satisfied.

Donna Maria now entered the room with the children, whose anxious wishes to return to their mamma, not all her kindness could repress, and she was obliged to yield, rather than see them so greatly distressed. A tender scene ensued, when they drew near the bed; their joy to hear her speak was so lively and touching, that it drew tears from the ladies. Henrietta kissed the hand of Violante—"You have made my dear mamma well; I thought that you looked like an angel, such as she has told me of.—O, how I love you."

This artless effusion of a grateful, tender heart, charmed Violante and her daughter; they embraced her and her brother, who was not backward in expressing his thanks also; and turning to Madame Bruyere—"Permit us, at least, to take your dear children with us, their too lively sensibility is rather more than

you can support." "With pleasure," said she, "I resign them to you; gratitude requires that pledge of my confidence."

When the young folks saw their mamma was much recovered, and heard what passed, with that ingenuousness which marks unadulterated minds, they each took a hand of Donna Maria's, and kissing them, declared their readiness to return with her.

When the lady's woman came, Donna Violante and her daughter took leave for the night, leaving Madame Bruyere impressed with the most grateful respect; Philip and Janette almost out of their wits with joy. From them she learnt the fortunate temerity of Philip in taking the letters from her pocket, and considered him as the instrument of Providence to preserve her life, though perhaps reserved for many trials and severe afflictions. But to the dispensations of heaven she bowed with humble submission, and looked to a life beyond this for peace and happiness; never to be attained in a turbulent world,

where wicked spirits have *their day* of triumph, though not of peace.

They exult in the completion of their base designs ; and if rioting in riches, and vaunting in their self consequence, they trample on the good and worthy, they appear to the undiscriminating eye possessed of happiness equal to their power.—But no, happiness never leagues with vice, she flies far from the guilty wretch, leaving only a semblance, a mockery of smiles, that passes current in the world, but cannot deceive himself. Conscience forces open the door of reflection, and makes the hardened sinner tremble.

“ Nor are the oppressor’s crimes in *sleep* forgot,
“ He starts appalled, for *Conscience* *slumbers* not.”

Poor Madame Bruyere, in the painful reflection of the evils she endured, had yet to thank heaven, she was the sufferer, not the perpetrator ; and bitter as her sorrows were, confessed the Marquis St. Juliers must be tenfold more wretched, whenever he lay like her, stretched on the
bed

bed of sickness, without one self-approving thought to cheer the inevitable hour of judgment and retribution!

She passed a very quiet night; a salutary sleep removed the fever, and restored her much beyond expectation; and in the morning when her faculties were strengthened, and her senses composed, that she could recollect the events of the preceding day, how did her bosom glow with gratitude to heaven, and to her earthly comforters, for such uncommon benevolence to a stranger.

The ladies, on paying their visit, were surpris'd at the pleasing alteration; they would not admit of those acknowledgements she was eager to express. Donna Violante sealed her lips with her hand—"Not a word on this subject, *we* are the obliged persons; the affectionate caresses of your beautiful children overpay every little service we have happily been permitted to offer you. Condescend, *Madame*," added she, "to make us further indebted to you, by allowing us to re-

move you and your faithful servants to my house; 'tis a favour you owe us," continued she, "for you have seized our hearts by surprise, and your Henry and Henrietta are already settled as part of my own family; therefore to reclaim them, you must become an inmate also."

No language could do justice to the feelings of the poor invalid; it was so long since she had heard the voice of affection and sincerity, that her heart, which had ever felt repugnant to the delusive kindness and extravagant praises lavished on her in the castle, now opened with joy to welcome the voice of truth, where the eyes confirmed the benevolent purposes of the speaker.

Tears gushed from her eyes, and pressing to her heart the hand that had sealed her mouth—"Dispose of me as you please," said she; "you are the delegates of heaven to comfort the daughter of affliction."

Before evening a litter arrived, most commodiously calculated to prevent the sick

sick from feeling the smallest inconvenience; and Madame Bruyere found herself in a superb house, and in a bed-chamber where the hand of delicate sensibility had provided every accommodation that her situation demanded, and every mark of respect that birth and merit had a claim to expect.

Indescribably struck with the several minute attentions that often escape a common mind, though joined to a benevolent heart, but which denotes a superior soul, and strongly characterises delicate beneficence, Madame Bruyere instantly drew her conclusions in favour of the ladies; she saw and felt that they were above praise, and abundantly gratified in the conscious rectitude of their own hearts, required not the poor acknowledgment of words: "'Tis the heart, the eyes, that must speak for me," said she, "any other language would be an insult to their feelings."

In the course of a very few days Madame Bruyere was so well recovered that

she could leave her apartment; but the melancholy and languor that was the consequence of heartfelt grief, no medicines could reach, no friendly attentions could cure.

Hitherto not the least curiosity had been expressed, not a single question asked relative to the cause of her visiting Lisbon; they knew her husband was in the Inquisition from the Count's letter, but they knew no more; and were careful to avoid every subject that could tend to distress her, the great point being to restore her health previous to any circumstance taking place that might disturb her mind.

Madame however felt the necessity of being perfectly candid with her benefactress, and determined, whatever it cost her, to conceal nothing from a friend; a limited confidence would be ungenerous, yet the latter part of her story was not less humiliating than afflictive; but from the kind efforts of those friends she might learn, what she dreaded to hear, the certain fate of her beloved husband.

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The succeeding day, after forming this resolution, she told them that it became her character to be perfectly ingenuous; and she felt it a duty to relate her melancholy story; as the appearance of a woman unknown, without friends, taking such a voyage, must excite curiosity, and perhaps tend to unfavourable conjectures.

After summoning all her fortitude to bear, and go through with the painful relation, she repeated every circumstance with which our readers are acquainted; not indeed at once, but at different periods of the day, being obliged to break off in her narrative several times from fatigue, and the agitations caused by the sorrowful retrospection of her calamities.

The ladies were deeply affected by her story, and shocked at the ungrateful and premeditated wickedness of the Marquis St. Juliers.

They used their best endeavours to console her—"Take courage, my dear Madame," said Donna Violante, "Providence may yet restore to you that beloved

and much injured husband ; and should it be otherwise, I trust you have too much piety to sink under the dispensations of the Almighty, when a duty so sacred calls upon you for fortitude, as that which binds you to the most amiable children I ever beheld."

Madame sighed heavily ; Donna Violante tenderly felt for her ; and, as if struck with a sudden recollection, exclaimed, " Our friend, Donna Elvira de Suza, is expected hourly from the country, she is related to the Grand Inquisitor, she may render us important service ; and to give her the power of being useful, is to confer a favour of the most pleasing nature. Yes, indeed," added Donna Maria, with energy, " she is the very best woman in the world."

At this moment the Count de Sylves, brother to Donna Violante, was announced ; he entered with an assured and haughty air, that could not prejudice an indifferent person in his favour, yet under that apparent repulsive dignity of manners,

ners, was concealed a soul of sensibility and benevolence; the natural pride and haughty reserve, which characterises the Portuguese nobility, was little more than a semblance in the Count. He had pride, it was true, but it was that becoming dignity which supported his own consequence, without wounding the feelings of others, or trampling on the miserable lower orders of the people, who are more oppressed, wretched, and abject, in Portugal, than in any other nation.

The Count was hastening to his sister, when his steps were arrested by seeing a stranger; Donna Violante immediately introduced her new friend and her brother to each other, in terms equally kind and flattering to both. Madame Bruyere felt more of respect than any emotions of an affectionate nature towards the brother of her benefactress; the Count was struck with her beauty, and affected by her pensive air, and the melancholy that presently took possession of her countenance.

After tenderly saluting his sister and niece, the reserve that had distanced him with Madame, presently gave way to the susceptibility of a generous heart, alive to the sorrow so visibly impressed on features that charmed him. He addressed her in a voice and with a manner so foreign to the idea she had conceived of him, and so relaxed from the dignity of his first appearance, that the awe he had inspired insensibly subsided, and the brother of her friend appeared entitled to as much esteem as respect.

The Count's return from the country was unexpected by Donna Violante, who had deferred sending to him the Count de Vassy's letter, lest it should have miscarried, as he was paying visits among his friends. Greatly delighted by seeing him, she longed to communicate the story of Madame Bruyere, and to deliver the letter; and when, after a short time, that lady rose to leave them, as she thought politeness required, no attempt was made to detain her.

Ma-

1 Madame Bruyere retired to her apartment, there to ruminate on past sorrows, and consider on the steps she must pursue in future. Every hour was an age of painful suspense, till the fate of her beloved husband was in some way known to her; and though she had, as she believed, ceased to hope, yet that last relief to the wretched, that flattering soother, which seldom forsakes even the most miserable, whilst the vital spark of life exists, would now and then whisper to her heart the possibility that he might survive his cruel persecutions; and if so, that the exertions of her uncommon friends might procure his release from that dreadful abode, the idea of which made her blood turn cold, and her heart tremble with horror.

Her present situation gave her little less pain than the chief source of her anxious solicitude; herself, her children, two servants, whom affection and gratitude twined round her heart; five persons thus supported by the benevolence of strangers on whom they had no claims, appeared
such

such an encroachment upon generosity, and was so repugnant to the delicacy of her own feelings, that not all the attentive politeness of the ladies could reconcile her to the weight of obligation that fastened itself upon her mind.

The apprehension of any pecuniary distress was yet at a great distance, she had found herself richer than she had hoped for; her resources would support them all with economy, she thought, near three years or more; and in that space of time, should heaven prolong her life, many opportunities might arise to benefit her children by her own exertions, or the interest of friends.

The knowledge she had obtained by her misfortunes, of the selfishness and duplicity of mankind, had taught her to fear the stability of friendship, and dread the idea of unreturnable obligations: yet the rectitude of her principles would not permit an ungenerous, sceptical disbelief to narrow her heart, and shut it from the voice of kindness, by indulging indiscriminate

minate suspicions of every friendly action that seemed calculated to relieve her.

She adored the benevolence of Donna Violante and her daughter, she did homage to their virtues; but there was a respect due to herself not to intrude upon them; and the continuance for any length of time, of such favours as she now received, would be painful in the extreme to her, and would, she concluded, tend to lessen her interest with them, and render her less deserving of their generous friendship.

After mature consideration therefore, she resolved to solicit their permission and interest to procure some decent habitation for her future residence.

Whilst those sentiments occupied the mind of Madame Bruyere, Donna Violante had delivered her commission from the Count de Vassy, and given her brother the outlines of her new friend's unfortunate story. He was little less affected than his generous sister, and assured her he would, without delay, take all possible methods

methods to learn if Monsieur Bruyere yet existed in the prison of the Inquisition.

He execrated the infamous Marquis, whom he pronounced the most hardened and atrocious of villains, that could deliberately deceive and injure the most interesting woman he had ever beheld——

“That man,” said he, “must be systematically a villain, a base, ungrateful wretch, fitted for deeds of perjury and horror; not one spark of virtue could inhabit a mind forgetful of benefits, and insensible to the delight of speaking comfort to the bosom of an afflicted friend, of proving his gratitude and friendship in the hour of adversity.”

The ladies perfectly coincided with him in his opinion of the detestable Marquis St. Juliers, and hoped by his exertions, and the interest of Donna Elvira, they should soon, if not give comfort, at least put an end to the agonizing torture of suspense that now racked the bosom of their unhappy guest.

The children, who had been in the garden,

garden, now came into the room, and struck the Count with surprise and admiration; their beauty and elegance of deportment he had never seen equalled.—

“ Ah !” cried he, “ what lovely young creatures ! How truly unfortunate their father, to be separated from such a wife, and such children !” He embraced them with a mixture of tenderness and regret.

Passionately fond of children, and with a heart feelingly alive to every endearing tie of domestic happiness, the Count de Sylves was unhappily precluded from indulging the natural sensibility of his soul, by an ungenial marriage with a woman, whose temper, taste, and sentiments never assimilated with his; and whose haughty, frigid, and inflexible disposition, had never been softened by maternal tenderness.

The Countess was of a distinguished rank, and possessed an immense fortune; love on her side, and the commands of parents he had ever venerated, joined to a perfect indifference for every other object, had induced the Count to accede to the

proposal —

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proposals for this very advantageous match; but, alas! he was one among the many who find the insufficiency of riches to produce happiness, and, before six months had elapsed, he bitterly regretted his too easy compliance with the persuasions of others, and found all domestic enjoyments were for ever banished from his habitation.

Both passionately wished for children, and sighed for their disappointment; but the Count was too sensible and generous to avow his regret openly, or relax in the attention and respect due to his lady.— With a less portion of good sense, a more irritable temper, and no command over her passions, the Countess was for ever lamenting her disappointment, and indelicately reproaching her husband for his indifference, to which cause she attributed her misfortune.

A disposition habitually bad, became every day more soured, more intolerable; jealous, envious, and revengeful, her acquaintance and domestics felt the ill effects of her unsufferable temper, which at length

length drove the former from all desire to associate with her, and the latter from feeling either respect, or a wish to oblige.

The Count, who was ten years younger than his sister, Donna Violante, that lady being at this period near four and forty, had sacrificed twelve years of his life to the dominion of this haughty wife. Too proud to complain, too generous to treat her with the severity she deserved, respect for his own dignity induced him to support her's; and he buried his regrets, vexation and sorrow in his own bosom.

Obliged to seek for other amusements than his domestic circle afforded him, he grew devoted to the pleasures of a country life; and though he had no heirs to enjoy his estates, he had relations he loved, and to improve his fortune for them, was the only enjoyment he derived from riches.

The Countess and Donna Violante rarely met, only exchanging visits of ceremony now and then; for the former looked with a malignant eye on her sister's children,
and

and envied her a blessing, which Heaven had denied to herself.

Donna Violante, who knew perfectly the state of her brother's mind, saw with concern the melancholy that pervaded his features on contemplating the charms of Madame Bruyere's engaging children.

“ You see, my dear brother,” said she, “ that the grant of our wishes is not always productive of their expected happiness; are not the misfortunes of Monsieur Bruyere aggravated tenfold by his affection and apprehensions for these sweet creatures? Does not the amiable Madame, suffer unceasing anxiety for their future destiny? And could their cruel separation be attended with such misery to both, were they not united by the tenderest affection, which reflects on each a double portion of sorrow for the distresses of the other?”

“ You would persuade me then,” answered he, with a languid smile, “ that indifference towards the object we are united to, and being a stranger to the endearing

endearing ties reciprocal between parents and children; that living unconnected with, and unknowing of, the sweet duties of domestic life, are the surest means of procuring tranquillity and happiness? Ah! sister, the feelings of *your* heart; the delight that springs to your eyes, when turned on your children, but poorly illustrate the system you would recommend."

"There is no situation in this world, my dear brother," returned she, "that has not its concomitant pleasure and pain: parental tenderness is ever accompanied with anxiety and care, the sweets and bitters are judiciously mixed in a mind of sensibility, and the dearer the object of our affections is to our heart, the greater is our solicitude for its welfare and happiness; besides, permit me to ask you, could you wish for a daughter that should inherit the disposition—but I ask your pardon, this is a delicate subject, and if you please shall rest here."

"With all my heart," replied he,

" 'tis

" 'tis a subject on which I cannot trust myself, and therefore wish to avoid. May I not hope to see Madame Bruyere again?" "Certainly, go my sweet Henrietta," said she, "and entreat your dear mamma to favour us with her company." The child readily flew to her mother, and soon returned with her. The Count passed the day with them, and Madame Bruyere was charmed with the urbanity of his manners.

The next morning when the ladies were assembled together, Madame Bruyere took courage to entreat from Donna Violante's friendship, the further kindness of recommending to her a small decent habitation for herself and family. "How!" cried that amiable woman surprised, "have we unhappily failed in our endeavours to merit your esteem, has any circumstance to us unknown given you displeasure, and rendered this house disagreeable to you?"

"O, no," returned Madame, kissing her hand, "far, very far, from such causes, proceeds my wish to be less troublesome

to

to you, and more at liberty to indulge those feelings that overcharge my heart sometimes almost to bursting: my respect, love, and gratitude, you are in full possession of; but ease and happiness I cannot enjoy, and to wound the bosom of my benefactress by a continual repetition of sorrows, and extract pity from your looks, for the melancholy that pervades mine; would be a poor return for your goodness, and the reflection must add to the pain that not even the balsam of friendship can remove."

"You distress me greatly," answered Donna Violante, "I know not how to answer you, be assured, my amiable friend, that my heart tenderly sympathises with yours; my daughter loves you as a sister, I feel for you the affection of a mother. I flatter myself when you know us better, you will believe, that if we have the power to soften the misfortunes that oppress you; to soothe one hour of sorrow, or by the most friendly exertions, can be so fortunate as to blunt the arrows of affliction levelled
against

against your peace; to you we shall be indebted, for some of the happiest moments of our lives, in being permitted to serve you, and mitigate the rigours of your destiny."

A copious flood of grateful tears, spoke more forcibly than words, the emotions of Madame Bruyere for kindness so nobly shewn to a stranger; yet the weight of obligations pressed more strongly on her heart than ever. "I feel myself a bankrupt," said she, as soon as she could speak, "deficient in every power of acknowledgment; yet I confess that I shall be still more indebted to you, if I may hope you will kindly oblige me in the request I have made."

"I fear you have a proud heart," returned Donna Violante, "you will not condescend to accept of our endeavours to make this house a pleasant asylum for you." "O, judge not so erroneously," cried Madame, "obligations from hearts like yours carry no degradation with them, if I am proud, 'tis you that lift me into consequence

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consequence with myself; and could you read what passes in my bosom, you would know that my respect and gratitude are without bounds.

"But, my dear lady, you must know, that it becomes a generous mind not to take all, that a liberal hand may offer, and that when the benefits we receive, are superior to what we feel ourselves entitled to, we shrink under a conscious sense of our own inferiority, and such humiliation must inflict pain."

"Say no more, my too scrupulous friend," said Donna Violante; "I will compound with your delicacy; grant me one month's indulgence of your company here, and if nothing happens in that time to change your situation, and banish that devouring sorrow, which miser like you covet to enjoy alone, I will endeavour to oblige you in your own way; and be content to receive you as an occasional visitant, if you will not be an inmate, and a partaker of our hearts and fortunes."

Madame Bruyere felt that excess of

grateful sensibility no language can describe; she rose, and threw herself into the arms of Donna Violante, "Angel of a woman!" cried she, "do with me what you please, my heart is in your hands."

The ladies were extremely touched by her affectionate gratitude, and gave due credit to the dignity of her mind, that would rather be subjected to certain inconveniencies, than be a supposed intruder on the generosity of strangers. But they saw that every effort of theirs to lessen her sorrows must prove fruitless, until the so much desired intelligence respecting her husband could be obtained, and that was now the chief object of their attention.

The Count de Sylves, who had come to Lisbon solely to visit his sister and her family, and with an intention of passing only two or three days with them; stimulated now by an eager desire to serve Madame Bruyere, declared he should not return to the country till he had procured some information on the subject nearest to her heart.

The

The third day after his arrival, when the family party were lingering at the dinner table; Donna Elvira de Suza was announced, and directly followed the servant. The ladies flew to embrace her, and Donna Violante led her to Madame Bruyere, whom she introduced to her friend with the most flattering encomiums; to Madame she said, "You have heard us speak of Donna Elvira, I have only therefore to present her as the friend of my heart, and deserving of your esteem."

Whilst the Count was paying his compliments, Madame Bruyere took a survey of her new acquaintance; Donna Elvira was like most of the Portuguese ladies, rather below the middle stature, thin, and pale; but she was elegantly formed, with a pair of sparkling black eyes, a great sweetness of countenance; and a harmony in her voice that went directly to the heart, and bespoke an interest there in favour of the speaker.

She was about forty, and had been a

widow above ten years; a native of Goa, possessed of a large fortune, she had married Don Pedro de Suza, who was the Viceroy of that city. They were married several years without having any children, but at length, to the great joy of themselves and their friends, Donna Elvira was brought to bed of a daughter.

This joyful event was quickly followed by the indisposition of Don Pedro, who from a slight cold he caught, on a visit to the country house of a friend, and which he neglected 'till it wore a serious complexion, had an inflammation settled on his lungs, that baffled all the skill of the physicians at Goa. He was advised to return to Portugal, the voyage, and his native air, were thought essential to the preservation of his life, and the only chances to remove the complaint from his lungs.

He submitted, rather than accorded, to their judgment, and the entreaties of his affectionate wife; the voyage was undertaken,

taken, and he expired the very day previous to its termination.

Donna Elvira, a stranger to Lisbon, sinking under the heartfelt sorrow that her calamities occasioned, was incapable of acting for herself; but her arrival, and the melancholy event of Don Pedro's death was quickly made known; an uncle of her husband prepared to receive her with the tenderest respect; the principal families vied with each other to console and entertain her.

The afflicted lady had a heart of susceptibility and gratitude, she was sensible of the value of the attentions she received; duty to her child, joined to that regard she felt due to the voluntary kindness of strangers; enabled her to struggle with her sorrows, and assume a degree of composure and resignation, which time, that meliorates the severest afflictions, at length confirmed into habit and reality.

Among all the ladies that visited her, her heart selected Donna Violante de Poissy as a friend; and when she removed

from the house of her uncle, to one of her own, and had formed the establishment of her family, her affection for that lady was her chief inducement to remain in Lisbon, and give up every idea of returning to Goa.

To the friendship of Donna Violante she was indebted for her support under the severest stroke that fate could inflict, the death of her adored child in the small pox, in little more than a year after its beloved and regretted father. To enlarge on her sufferings is unnecessary, 'tis sufficient to say, that to the unremitting attentions of her friend, and the amiable Donna Maria, she owed the preservation of her life and reason; both of which were many weeks in hazard of being lost.

From that time the two ladies had been inseparably united in the closest bands of friendship, and on the death of Monsieur de Poissy, Donna Elvira repaid some part of her obligations, by her constant attention, and solicitude for the peace of her much loved friend.

At

At this period of our history Donna Elvira had been in the country to assist at the nuptials of a distant relation to her late husband, to every branch of whose family she behaved with uncommon generosity and respect, and whose uncle was the Grand Inquisitor, mentioned by Donna Violante to Madame Bruyere.

The moment she returned to Lisbon she hastened to her friends, and was not a little surprised to be introduced to a stranger, with whose charms and interesting countenance she was much struck, and whose air of melancholy, impossible to be disguised, quickly made its way to a heart of sensibility like hers.

After some little general conversation, Madame Bruyere politely withdrew, supposing the friends might wish to be alone. Donna Violante availed herself of the opportunity to relate her story, and claim the interest of Elvira with her uncle. That lady was extremely affected by the many and undeserved misfortunes that had befallen such an amiable woman, and her

ill-starred husband; she declared that she felt a lively interest in their distresses, and the following day should be appropriated to their service with her uncle.

On the return of Madame Bruyere with her lovely children, Donna Elvira could not repress her admiration of the latter, she embraced them with a sigh of recollection, yet with a tenderness that spoke to the heart of their mother; the more she saw of this lady, the more she admired her; and Donna Elvira, impressed with respect and compassion towards her, a reciprocity of esteem was soon established between them, such as the generous lady of the house wished to inspire.

The next day Donna Elvira was expected to dinner, but she sent an apology, and promised to see them in the evening; the Count de Sylves had been absent from an early hour in the morning, he returned not at the usual time, and the ladies, who judged both parties were employed in the investigation they had requested, felt anxious and uneasy.

Madame

Madame Bruyere had passed a sleepless night, she dwelt on the hope Donna Violante had expressed from the interest of her friend; and now that there appeared a possibility of ascertaining the life or death of her husband, she was agitated by the most painful inquietude. Thus mutually solicitous for the event of the enquiry, afraid to indulge delusive hopes, and dreading the result of it, they were incapable of being cheerful, and only sought to conceal their feelings from each other.

Never did a day pass more heavily than this, between three amiable persons; at length Donna Elvira appeared, her friends examined her looks with anxious curiosity, they could learn nothing from their expression; Madame, who could not presume to expect that she should so immediately attend to her affairs, yet considered her as the oracle that must be the vehicle of intelligence, on which more than life depended; felt such a variety of emotions swell in her bosom, that unable to suppress

them,

them, she rose, and no opposition being made by any of the company, she retired, to give that relief to her oppressed heart, she had with difficulty endeavoured to conceal.

The moment she had withdrawn, Donna Elvira, not waiting to be questioned, said hastily, in a low voice, "he lives, Monsieur Bruyere actually exists in the Inquisition."

"Good God!" exclaimed Donna Violante, "and what, my dear friend, have you done for him?" "Every thing you can wish, every thing that *can* be done for the present; I have related the heads of their story to my uncle, and have interested him so far, that he has promised to see and talk with the unfortunate prisoner this night.

"You will tremble when I tell you that he has already undergone two examinations, and had not a severe illness taken hold of him for some weeks, by the interposition of Providence, a third, which might have been terminated by the severest
tortures,

tortures, would in all probability have ended his sufferings and life together.

“ He is, contrary to every expectation, getting the better of his disorder, and next week is the time fixed for the last dreadful examination. Think then how opportune, or rather let me say, how graciously heaven has interposed, at this critical period, to bring Madame Bruyere to this city, and to your protection, for the preservation, as I hope, of her unfortunate husband.”

“ Heaven and its holy saints be praised,” cried Donna Violante, “ but not a word of this must transpire to that dear lady; the event of your generous exertions is yet unknown; the suspense of uncertain hopes she is ill calculated to support, and should they prove delusive, the shock might destroy her.” “ You are certainly right to let the matter rest unknown to Madame Bruyere, another day perhaps may end all our doubts, and I hope crown our endeavours with success.”

“ But as we are alone,” added Donna Elvira, “ with that confidence of unre-served friendship that subsists between us, permit me to say, that I wish your brother, the Count, was in the country, I feel alarmed for his peace; of all the women I have ever beheld, Madame Bruyere appears to me the most likely object to captivate a heart that has hitherto been invulnerable to the charms of beauty.

“ His peculiar situation, tied to a woman he must despise, whose narrow ideas, unjust suspicions, and vile, capricious temper, renders his home hateful, and his senses but too ready to see and acknowledge the unquestionable superiority of such a woman as he now visits. The situation he is placed in, I must repeat, I think dangerous in the extreme.”

“ Alas !” cried Donna Violante, “ the sufferings of that dear brother give me many painful hours; Heaven forbid that a hopeless passion should add to his unhappiness! but I think you are needlessly alarmed; he is too old to give the reins to
fancy,

fancy, and too honourable to indulge an improper inclination: he admires, he compassionates Madame Bruyere, but I believe a habit of indifference for the sex, and his taste for rural occupations, are likely to preserve him from any attachment of the heart."

"I wish it may be so," returned her friend; "my sincere esteem for him, makes me greatly interested in every event that concerns his peace; and unhappily the little pleasure he can derive from domestic enjoyments, obliges him to seek elsewhere for comfort; 'tis therefore that I fear for the susceptibility of his heart, when seeing and conversing with a woman so lovely: his greatest security, I think, is the situation both are placed in, which precludes hope, and demands from honour the suppression of every tender sentiment."

The Count at this moment entered the room, with every mark of disturbance and emotion: "My dear sister," said he, "I must quit you abruptly; the Marquis de Barcellos (brother to his lady) detained me,

me, greatly against my inclinations, to dine with him; I had been soliciting his interest for the unfortunate Monsieur de Bruyere. —About an hour since, a messenger arrived post from my house, with an account that his lady had fallen over a flight of steps leading to the garden, and was dangerously hurt. I have procured two surgeons, whom I have sent before me with all speed, and must immediately follow them. Heaven bless you all; commend me in the most respectful manner to your charming guest, I flattered myself to have had the honour of being useful to her, but the claims of duty and humanity must supersede all others at present. —Once more adieu!”

He flew out of the house without waiting for an answer, and had spoken with such rapidity, that neither of the ladies had an opportunity to interrupt him.

“This is a sad and very unlucky event,” said Donna Violante; “my poor brother is so seldom permitted to escape from her suspicious vigilance, it is so rarely that

that she concedes to let him visit his friends, that I hoped we should have been able to retain him for some time: alas! he is a melancholy instance of the infelicity that results from a marriage of indifference, with a woman whose horrid temper turns every blessing into a curse, and who, disappointed in one favourite wish, renders herself and every one connected with her truly miserable."

"I confess," replied Donna Elvira, that "I have often thought the too great indulgence she has met with has encreased both her insolence and ill temper: the Count has more the manners of a French than a Portuguese husband."

"He has too much pride and generosity," said Donna Maria, "to treat any woman ill, particularly when that woman is in his power; and, however undeserving the Countess is of his consideration, the more merit is attached to his forbearance: indeed, my uncle has too much true dignity of mind, to relax in his own duties because his wife fails in her's, and the
more

more contempt *she* inspires, the more we must esteem *him*."

"True, my love," answered Donna Elvira, "you distinguish very properly; there is but little merit in behaving well to those who are *entitled* to our regards, 'tis in returning good for evil, in suppressing the natural resentment that we feel at being injured, or unjustly suspected, and, conscious of our own integrity, supporting our just consequence without retaliating upon those who have provoked ill-treatment: 'tis such conduct that entitles us to esteem, both from ourselves and the world."

"I am afraid, then," returned Donna Violante, "that you will class me among the less meritorious order of beings, when I acknowledge, that I should feel neither regret nor sorrow if my brother was emancipated from the terrible yoke that has oppressed him so many years. I do not rejoice at the accident she has met with, I wish her a less painful death; I assure you I do not want charity, but a woman

of her disposition lives a torment to herself, and destroys the happiness of others."

"Not to dwell longer on this subject," said Donna Elvira, "I wish to pass an hour or two with Madame Bruyere." "I will with pleasure convey your wishes to her," said Donna Maria, "for I regret every moment of her absence, she is so truly amiable."

Whilst she departed to execute her commission, Donna Violante repeated the conversation that had taken place between them. "I enter into the delicacy of her sentiments," said she, "she cannot support what she calls obligations, and I admire her the more for the nobleness of her spirit; but now that her husband lives, and I hope will obtain his liberty, I have no doubt but she will insist upon leaving me, though I certainly shall detain them as long as I can."

"Before any plan is determined on," answered her friend, "we must see what state of health the poor gentleman is in, for

for I apprehend he is barely recovering from a long and dangerous illness."

The entrance of Madame Bruyere stopt any further conversation on that head; but Donna Elvira felt such a tender sympathy for her misfortunes, and was so charmed with the elegance and good sense she displayed in conversing on several subjects, that she conceived a warm friendship for her, which was demonstrated by the most generous actions.

It was late before they parted, mutually pleased with each other, and feeling a reciprocity of regard. Madame Bruyere, with reverence, expressed her gratitude to Heaven; that by the fortunate meeting with the Count de Vassy on Mount Jura, she had been thrown into the acquaintance and protection of three such women, as could scarcely be equalled any where.

Thus Providence, gracious and benign, often by a chain of events we can neither foresee nor controul, produces good out of evil, and leads us imperceptibly from misery

fery and wretchedness to hope and comfort ! a lesson to the suffering and impatient spirit never to despair.

Donna Violante mentioned to her guest the abrupt departure of her brother, and the little comfort he enjoyed in his domestic circle ; she enumerated all his estimable qualities, and concluded, with a sigh of regret, that such virtues as he possessed, which in an active life might have diffused blessings on hundreds, and rendered him an ornament to society, were, by the capricious, jealous, and narrow-minded temper of his lady, compelled to lay dormant, that he might compound for a temporary peace, rather than live in a state of continual warfare with an unjust and discontented woman.

Madame Bruyere, though she had known but little of the Count, and her first prepossessions were not in his favour, had seen enough in their short acquaintance to observe a fund of good sense, and great sensibility, added to a dignified polish of manners, which proved he had gleaned
from

from other countries that elegance and knowledge, which was in those days by no means the characteristic of the Portuguese nobility.

She lamented, therefore, the unfortunate union that embittered his life, and regretted the accident which had deprived them of his society, though she honoured him for his attention to a woman so little deserving of it.

The following day, Donna Violante prepared Madame Bruyere to expect that her friend would be engaged in making the desired enquires of her uncle the Grand Inquisitor; and observing her strong emotions, she added—" 'Tis now, my dear Madame, that you must summon all that fortitude which has hitherto supported you under so many trials, and, relying on the just designs of Providence, whose immutable decrees are always calculated for our real benefit, prepare yourself to bear the result of those enquiries with that due submission and noble resolution becoming
your

your character, and the endearing ties of maternal duty.

“Ah, my God!” exclaimed Madame Bruyere, “my husband has perished, he no longer exists!” “Do not so rashly give yourself up to despair,” returned Donna Violante; “I have reason to hope he yet lives; compose yourself, and I will keep nothing from you; though I did not intend to be so explicit at this time, but I see I have gone too far in alarming you, to observe the silence I was enjoined by my friend.”

She then repeated the intelligence brought by Donna Elvira; and bid her hope, that if he could not be immediately liberated, at least that he would meet with kinder treatment, and no doubt, in a short time, obtain a deliverance from that horrid prison;

Madame Bruyere sat immoveable during this recital, every nerve trembling, but incapable of uttering one word; overpowered by her emotions, and a quick succession of painful ideas, the last word

bottom

was

was scarcely pronounced before she fell senseless from her chair.

The ladies, greatly shocked, flew for proper assistance and remedies, which were successfully employed, and in a short time she was restored to life. The servants having withdrawn, the ladies tenderly besought her to recal her reason and fortitude, to hope every thing from time and the exertions of her friends; that the certainty of Monsieur's existence, under all his sufferings, ought to inspire her with confidence in Heaven, that, in its own good time, every event would be ordered for the best, and that future happiness might amply compensate for past misfortunes.

Pressing the hand of Donna Violante to her bosom, "Ah! my generous comforter," cried Madame Bruyere, "my heart acknowledges your goodness, it bows in gratitude to Heaven for the preservation of my husband's life:—that much-wronged husband," added she, with a deep sigh, "who is dearer to me than my existence, but whose every look, if I am ever permitted

mitted to behold him, must cover me with confusion, and sink me into shame and horror—for what am I now?—what have I been? Oh! my excellent, my dear Bruyere!” exclaimed she, passionately, “your wife is no longer worthy of you, your pure heart will turn from her with contempt.”

The agonies this reflection occasioned, terrified both ladies; they exerted every power of persuasion to calm her mind, deduced every argument justice and reason suggested to prove, not only that she was blameless, but that, circumstanced as she was, her conduct had been meritorious.

“Let the blame fall as it ought, on the infamous Marquis,” said Violante, “Monsieur Bruyere must consider you pure as an angel.” “But,” cried she, “do you believe his noble spirit will sit down tamely under such base, such irreparable injuries? O no, I know him better; he will pursue the villain to the uttermost verge of the earth, and will at last fall a sacrifice to his horrid devices.—

I see

I see it all; I know, I feel that I shall be the cause of his destruction, the miserable wretch whose weakness will ruin and destroy my husband and children!"

In vain did Violante combat every terror that agitated her bosom, every self-accusation that tormented her brain; she shook her head in an emphatic silence, that spoke the impossibility of receiving comfort. "But why," said Donna Maria, "should Monsieur Bruyere ever know the circumstances that thus afflict you? Why may he not suppose that you came here hearing of his misfortune? Suffer the crimes of the detestable Marquis to remain unknown and unrevealed, and you may, if Heaven restores him to liberty and health, pass the remainder of your days in peace and happiness."

"How!" cried Madame, her eyes sparkling with a generous disdain—"How! do you believe I would deceive my unsuspecting husband; that I would return to his arms as a virtuous, deserving wife; that I could stifle the self-upbraidings of

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conscience, and receive the esteem and confidence that my heart tells me I am unworthy of?

“No! If Heaven permits me, through you, to be the humble instrument of rescuing him from the horrid prison, where, though innocently, I was the cause of his being confined, to preserve his invaluable life, I have but one plan to pursue—to conceal the sad events that have destroyed my peace, restore to my children the protection of a father, retire from the world, and permit him to reproach me with weakness, enthusiasm, superstition, or any follies that may tend to lessen my interest in his heart, without believing me criminal, or exciting him to vengeance on a villain whose arts might destroy him.

“To see him once more, to place my darling children in the arms of a beloved father, and to retire for ever from the sight of mankind, is now all the good I covet, all the comfort my sad fate allows me.”

Donna Violante rightly judged this was

not a proper time to dispute with her the propriety or expediency of the plan she had proposed; she therefore only sought to calm her agitations, and bring her to that composed resignation which might enable her to bear what further information they hourly expected from Donna Elvira.

Madame Bruyere vainly endeavoured to tranquillize her spirits, and profit by the kind consolations of her friends; her mind was in tumults: painful retrospections, future prospects, and present anxiety, tore her bosom with such a number of conflicting passions, that when at length Donna Elvira appeared, she gasped for breath, rose, re-seated herself, and found it impossible to articulate a word.

Donna Elvira saw with concern and surprise her various emotions, and from thence concluded her friend had not observed the secrecy she had enjoined. All further concealment was now unnecessary; she took her seat by the poor agitated lady, and pressing her hand — “ You
have

have nobly supported misfortunes," said she, tenderly, "it remains to be proved if you can with equal magnanimity enjoy brighter prospects.—My dear Madame, Providence counteracts the designs of the wicked; I congratulate you with my whole soul."—"What?—oh!—what?" cried Madame Bruyere, choaked with the violence of her emotions.

"Monsieur Bruyere, that most cruelly oppressed, that deserving unfortunate, is, thank Heaven, at my house." The head of Madame fell on the bosom of this generous lady, as she clasped her in her arms; some drops speedily recovered her from a temporary suspension of the senses, she looked earnestly on her friends, raised her eyes in thankfulness to Heaven, attempted to speak, but again her head dropped on the arms that supported her.

Donna Elvira, to rouse her from this stagnation of her faculties, resumed her story:—"Yes," continued she, "my dear lady, your worthy husband is now at my house, brought there this morning;

I have done every thing for him you can wish; he has taken refreshments proper for his weak state, and I left him enjoying a sweet repose in a comfortable bed.

“ I will not conceal from you,” added she, “ that he has been dangerously ill; that, in his present weak state, I think you ought not to see him, nor shall I venture to tell him you are in Lisbon. We must guard against the effects of surprises: much precaution was necessary to prepare him to support the transport of being liberated from his dreadful dungeon, and the fate he knew impended over him; he was greatly affected, and it took me some hours to compose his agitations, and bring him to the state that now gives me assurance he will awake easy and tranquillized: a salutary sleep will prove the best restorative.”

What did not Madame Bruyere feel of gratitude to her amiable friends! Every emotion of the soul was expressive in her looks and actions of the lively sense she entertained of obligations, superior to every

every power of acknowledgment by words ; for the favour being proportionate to the horrid torments from which her husband was rescued, was, indeed, beyond all price, nor could any language have done justice to her sentiments.

The three friends congratulated her and themselves ; Donna Maria embraced her with fervour—" My friend, my sister !" said she, " Heaven has heard my prayers, and you will yet be happy !" At the word " happy " Madame Bruyere shuddered ; but recovering, and returning her embrace---" Believe," said she, " that I know full well how to appreciate this goodness, though my powers are inadequate to express what I feel."

Donna Elvira arose, " I must return to my patient ; this day, my dear Madame, you must restrain your impatience, and commit him to my care, every thing depends upon rest and quiet.---I permit you to *envy* me," added she, smiling, " but do not be jealous, I will be faithful to

my trust, and every two or three hours you shall hear how we go on."

Madame Brüyere kissed and pressed her hands to her bosom---"I must envy you, but, alas! I am unworthy to supersede you.—God support me!" cried she, lifting her eyes to heaven, "and restore to health the most injured of mankind!"

When Donna Elvira had quitted them, Donna Maria, who had observed with pain that during all the different conflicts of Madame Bruyere's mind not a single tear had fallen from her eyes, and fearful that her agitations might have some fatal effect, stole out of the room to fetch her children, in the hope that maternal tenderness might produce that necessary relief to an overcharged heart.

The event answered her wishes; the moment they appeared, Madame sprung to meet them, and throwing her arms round both, pressing them alternately to her bosom, she burst into such a violent flood of tears, that the poor children were
greatly

greatly alarmed, and indeed the ladies, for it brought on strong hysterics, that lasted above an hour before she could be recovered.

But when restored to composure, she experienced the good effects of the plentiful effusion; it left her weak, but free from the tremblings and oppressions that had almost stopt her respiration. The two lovely creatures hung over her in silent anguish; she could not support the anxious, inquisitive eye of Henrietta, and the tender caresses of her loved Henry---“ My children,” said she, “ be not surprised, nor uneasy; you have cause to rejoice; your beloved father, whose death we so greatly lamented, that dear parent is yet alive.”

“ My papa alive, whom we thought dead !” cried Henry; “ O, then *he* will protect us from our cruel father that wanted to shut us from our mamma within iron gratings.”

’Tis impossible to paint the anguish and confusion that overwhelmed the unhappy
E 4 mother;

mother; she had not recollected the natural inference of the children, after having been taught to consider the Marquis St. Juliers as their father, when they should understand their first parent was still living. "Two papas!" said Henrietta; "ah! I am sure I love my first dear papa best, and hope we never shall return to the other, who would have separated us from you, my dear mamma." "No," returned Henry, "our papa Bruyere loves us all, and we shall now be happy; our dear mamma will have no more sorrow I hope.—O, how poor Philip will rejoice!"

Not one word escaped from Madame Bruyere, while the children were thus innocently striking daggers to her heart. Donna Maria saw her emotions, and taking each by the hand, "Retire with me, my loves, you must not oppress your mamma." They flung their arms round her, embraced, and left her.

When they had quitted the room, she looked stedfastly for a few minutes on Donna Violante—"Alas!" cried she, "what

" what has my indiscretion done; how will it be possible now to have any concealments from my dear Bruyere, what must my children think of past circumstances, and how humbled must I appear before those who know my situation---my children, my servants!—My God!" exclaimed she, " into what a labyrinth I am plunged; every plan I have adopted, every step I have taken, since the fatal hour that first separated us, by a cruel fatality, has involved me in fresh difficulties, have been productive of shame and sorrow!"

" You distress yourself needlessly." answered Violante, " do not anticipate evils; nothing is more easy than to account for the children's calling the Marquis father, or even to prevent them from repeating his name, when told that it afflicts you; and for the servants, so devoted to you, you can have nothing to fear from them: let us leave the event to Providence, at present our attention must be directed to restore you both to health."

Madame sighed deeply.—" How pre-

sumptuous are our wishes!" said she;
"and how often is our faulty impatience
punished by the grant of them! I have
wearied Heaven with my prayers, almost
without hope, that my loved, my poor
injured Bruyere might escape the diabolical
designs of his base enemy, that I might
find him alive; and now that his Divine
Protector has delivered him from the
deadly snares spread round him—now I
tremble with horror, I sink with confusion
and shame, at the idea of meeting his
mild, affectionate eye, that ever has been
accustomed to see his Louisa with delight.
O, Madame, what a situation is mine!—
but my children will have a father, and I
shall die content."

The friends of Madame Bruyere exerted
all their tender eloquence to speak peace
to her mind; and to convince her, that
her late union with that most infamous of
men could in no shape attach criminality
to her, whose motives, for conceding to a
connection she was not permitted to avoid,

were

were derived from the purest source, from maternal tenderness alone.

She heard them with attention, and was penetrated with gratitude; but the innate feelings of virtue, delicacy, and honour, pressed heavily on her mind, and counteracted every argument deduced by friendship and reason.

They heard twice that evening from Donna Elvira; she gave a very good account of her patient, and promised them an early visit in the morning. Madame Bruyere returned thanks to Heaven, and retired early to her apartment, not to sleep, for the occurrences of the day so occupied her mind, that she never once closed her eyes; but she employed the hours in collecting fortitude for the scenes she must go through; and having formed her resolution, she grew, if not easier, at least more resigned.

She had scarcely got dressed in the morning, a task attended with some difficulty, from the feebleness that pervaded her limbs, and the languor that hung over

her spirits, which obliged Janette to desist several times, and let her rest; she was therefore but just ready to leave her apartment when Donna Elvira arrived, who, without waiting to be interrogated, congratulated Madame Bruyere on the amended health of her husband.

“ Rest and nourishment has done wonders for him,” said she; “ and I think that in the course of the day, I may, by degrees, prepare him for a happiness he little expects. To observe the silence and reserve his situation demands, I was obliged to restrain him from speaking; for this morning, after some very kind speeches to me, he asked to whom he was indebted for his liberation from that most horrid of all prisons.

“ I answered, ‘ to a dear friend.’ ‘ Ah!’ said he, ‘ the Marquis St. Juliers; it can be no other; his active friendship discovered my hopeless fate——Do you know him, Madame? Can you tell me if my dearest wife, my darling children, are well? —O, how has that beloved woman lamented

mented my destiny. My friend too——” I interrupted him,” continued Donna Elvira, for I could not endure that he should be so deceived—‘ ’Tis not to the Marquis St. Juliers that you are indebted for your deliverance, but to a much dearer friend; one who knows him, indeed, but who was not influenced by him. You must ask me no further questions, in time you will know every circumstance; I can, however, assure you, that when I saw this friend of your’s last, I understood Madame Bruyere and your children were in perfect safety.’

“ His eyes sparkled, his whole countenance was animated, he was going to speak with eagerness—‘ Stop,’ I cried, waving my hand, ‘ I will have no transports, no exclamations; keep yourself perfectly quiet, and look forward to the accomplishment of all your wishes in due time.’ He snatched my hand, and kissed it, calling me ‘ blessed angel.’ And, as I thought I had gone quite as far as I ought on the first

first opening, I hastened away to gratify your impatience."

Madame Bruyere felt her heart glow with gratitude to this amiable woman; she expressed her thanks in the warmest language that such a heart could dictate; but her pale looks and languid spirits were but little correspondent with her lively expressions, and gave very real concern to her friends.

"I beseech you, Madame," said she to Elvira, "to complete your generous work, to prepare my unfortunate husband to see that woman so tenderly mentioned, that woman so innocently a criminal; and who, at this moment, would sacrifice every hope of life with transport, could she die in his arms guiltless, and deserving of his affection."

Donna Elvira was about to answer, when a messenger arrived from the Count de Sylves to his sister, with information that his lady had expired within three hours after his arrival. He added, that
the

the sudden event, and unhappy termination of her life, had greatly affected him; though he did not pretend to play the hypocrite, or display a heartfelt sorrow, which he could not be supposed to feel, for a woman who had embittered his life: but he lamented the fatal catastrophe, and earnestly hoped she was translated to happier regions. He concluded with requesting his respects to her guests, till decorum permitted him to make them personally.

The sister, niece, and friend, however humanity induced them to pity the untimely fate of a woman, miserable from the indulgence of a wayward disposition, could not but feel pleasure that a man so truly amiable was emancipated from a slavery that goodness and honour made him patiently submit to, rather than exert those rights and that authority common in Portuguese husbands, but which, from a liberal and generous turn of mind, he disdained to use.

After this unexpected event had been canvassed over, Donna Elvira said, that
having

having now Madame's permission, she would see if it were possible to prepare Monsieur Bruyere to support a transport he had so little cause to hope for; and that, as she should simply mention his lady's arrival in Lisbon, she left it to her to account for the circumstance, in whatever manner judgment and mature reflection suggested, to do herself justice, and spare him unnecessary pain.

The countenance of Madame Bruyere underwent many changes, and her bosom heaved with various emotions; "Heaven only knows," answered she, "how I may conduct myself; at present, my resolutions appear to me decided; but, alas! when the trial comes, our best resolves are fruitless, our seeming fortitude easily subdued."

In a situation and under circumstances so delicate, the ladies were fearful of saying more than had already been discussed on the subject; all they could do was, to urge that the impartial eye of reason must pronounce her in every respect blameless, and that even prejudice, and the utmost severity

severity of an enemy, could not fasten guilt on her conduct.

She was extremely sensible of their kind endeavours to lift her above the reproaches of her own heart; but though she did not feel conscious of criminality, she accused herself of an unpardonable weakness in being the miserable dupe of others, through credulity, and want of that persevering firmness which, *now* she thought, might have baffled all their schemes; forgetting that to judge from an event she could not foresee or expect, was an unfair way of pronouncing judgment against herself.

The day was far advanced before a messenger arrived with a note from Donna Elvira; Madame Bruyere had trembled at every opening of the door, and felt such a contrariety of emotions, impatience, fear, hope, and anxiety, that when the note was delivered, her agitations caused her to turn so sick, that she was incapable of breaking it open; she gave it to Donna Violante, who presently congratulated her on the contents.

“ Hasten

“Hasten to us, my dearest Madame Bruyere.—My reasonable and amiable patient received my agreeable information with inexpressible transport, but with a fortitude becoming a noble mind tried in the school of affliction. Exert your’s to support an interview so desirable; do yourself but *half* the justice you claim from the world, and your friends will rejoice in the happiness now in your own power, and which you are so fully entitled to expect.”

Madame could not speak for a moment, she struggled to suppress her agitations which impeded speech, embraced Violante and her daughter in emphatic silence, in an agony they well understood. Donna Maria returning her embrace, “Be composed, my dear friend, you are going to meet the object dearest to you on earth, who is indebted to your affection and courage for his present existence, for being saved from indescribable tortures.—How must your heart exult in the reflection!”

This considerate and consoling idea had
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an instantaneous effect upon the agitated lady; she raised her head—"Heaven bless you!" said she, "you have, indeed, conveyed a temporary delight to my bosom.—O, let us hasten now, while I feel the ray of comfort you have imparted, to sustain me through this much dreaded, much wished-for interview. Alas! little did I think it possible any other sensation than pleasure could accompany me when I was to meet my ever-dear Bruyere!"

The ladies sought to encourage *her* by an appearance of high satisfaction in themselves, during their way to Donna Elvira's, who received them with an air expressive of joy, though she was not a little agitated for the event. Madame Bruyere, when she sat down, for a moment gasped for breath; she was prevailed upon to take some cordial drops, and rest while her arrival was announced.

When Donna Elvira returned to conduct her, she caught the hand of Donna Violante—"Go with me, leave me not, support me; my dear friends, I am unequal

equal to the conflict in my bosom, I cannot see him without your supporting presence."

They attended her to the apartment; the persecuted, unfortunate Bruyere was seated in an arm-chair, pale, and greatly emaciated; the instant she appeared, he opened his arms with an exclamation of joy, she threw herself into them, and was in the same moment senseless. Weak and terrified, he was incapable of supporting her, had not Donna Elvira come to his aid, and between her and Donna Maria she was placed on the bed, while Violante sought to compose the terror that seized on her husband.

"Ah!" said he, "joy is too much for her frame to support; a long acquaintance with sorrow has weakened her mind.—Dearest of women, how much have you suffered thus to reduce such a form to this state of imbecility!"

Whilst he hung over her with the most affecting tenderness, the ladies had recalled her to life; she looked up, and met his eyes

eyes fixed on her with unutterable fondness.—“My love, my best Louisa!” cried he; “thou better angel, to whom I owe my life, welcome, a thousand welcomes to these faithful arms; possessed of thee once more, no misery can reach me, nor shall any delusive, flattering hopes ever part us more!”

She rather suffered than returned his embraces, but pressed his hand to her bosom with tenderness bordering on agony.

—“Heaven be praised!” said she, in a tremulous voice, “that you are safe: My God! how you are altered, what havoc have your pitiless enemies made!”

“Speak not of the past,” he replied;

“to enfold you, my Louisa, again to my bosom; to know my darling children are also well; indebted to this dear lady for liberty and life; let us think no more on past sufferings, but gratefully enjoy the goodness of Heaven, which has restored us to each other.”

Madame Bruyere turned, and throwing an expressive glance on her three friends,

could no longer suppress the painful emotions of her full heart, but sinking into a chair, burst into tears.

That look of Madame Bruyere seemed to say—"Alas! how soon will disappointment tread upon the heels of exultation;" they felt the force of her appeal to their pity, and, as if actuated by one idea, they rose to leave the room—"Oh! stay, leave us not," she cried, with an eagerness that astonished her husband. "Pardon us," said Elvira, "'tis our duty to retire; a meeting so sacred, may very well dispense with witnesses; I hope you are both so well recovered from your first emotions, that our presence is unnecessary.—We shall be at your command on the first notice."

They left the room immediately: the tears of Madame Bruyere no longer flowed; she seemed suddenly to struggle with her feelings: Monsieur caught her to his bosom—"My Louisa, my love, why are you so disordered, why so unwilling to be alone with me? Fear not, however great
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my transport, Heaven has given me a soul to support the mighty joy of being again restored to your arms.

“ My beloved wife !” continued he, warmly embracing her, “ recollect yourself, you have borne adversity, do not let your spirits sink under a prosperous change.” “ O, how you are altered, how much misery must have been your portion !” said she, gazing on him with earnest looks.

“ True, my love, I have suffered greatly, but dwell not on what no longer exists : my dearest Louisa has been a sufferer too, her bloom is gone, these sparkling eyes have lost their animation, and for me she has endured that poignant distress which has clouded her beauty ; but soon, I hope, we shall both experience that peace which, when lodged in the bosom, restores health to the body.

“ I know that I owe my deliverance from worse than death to your influence and exertions ; but doubtless 'tis to the indefatigable kindness of our best friend,
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the Marquis, that a discovery was made of my situation. Seldom or never does the poor wretch who falls under the power of that horrid tribunal, escape with life, and rarely can any enquiries lead to a knowledge of his fate or existence. I feel, therefore, how, beyond all power of acknowledgment, I am indebted to our dear Marquis in the first instance."

The perturbations, the extreme agony that affected the whole frame of Madame, when her poor, deceived husband mentioned his detestable enemy with such kindness, were beyond all description. Incapable of disguising her emotions, much less of permitting him to cherish such delusive ideas, she eagerly exclaimed, quite thrown off her guard—"Name not that monster, that perfidious villain, who, under the mask of friendship, has ruined every prospect of peace and happiness!

"You look astonished, incredulous; alas! my poor, deceived Bruyere, you will one day learn a horrid mystery, a tale to wring your noble heart with horror."

"I

“ I conjure you, my dear Louisa,” said he, “ to unfold this mystery now; tell me if I am in my senses, if I hear right, when you denounce the Marquis St. Juliers as a villain?” “ As the worst of villains!” answered she: “ Know, then, that ’tis to him—that false, ungrateful wretch—’tis to him you owe all your miseries, your imprisonment, and every succeeding evil that must embitter your future life.”

“ Amazement!” cried he; “ impossible! surely ’tis impossible; my dear Louisa, some vile wretch has imposed upon you.—The Marquis, he, in whom I confided, to whose care I entrusted the dearer parts of myself, who loved and relieved me with grateful kindness——O, my Louisa, say not that this man could be false and perfidious. By what means could you learn my dreadful fate—how could you have power or courage to venture here—how acquire such friends as have so nobly exerted themselves to save me? All that you have said, every circumstance I know,

appears inexplicable to me, and contradictory to each other."

Whilst he was thus interrogating her, Madame Bruyere had time to reflect on his weak state, and the fatal consequences that might attend a free disclosure of every circumstance; she therefore endeavoured to collect fortitude sufficient to give him a partial account, in answer to his questions.

She told him, that it was from a lady, a relation to the Marquis, to whom she was indebted, not only for a disclosure of his ungrateful villainy, but for some further deep-laid schemes, not now necessary to mention; that it was by the contrivance of the Marquis he had been thrown into the prison of the Inquisition, in the hope of being for ever delivered from a man who had obliged him too much, and whom, therefore, from a turpitude of soul, incapable of generosity and gratitude to return favours he could not but remember, he wished entirely to destroy.

She added, that corroborating circumstances

stances giving due weight to this information, and having long been dissatisfied with the conduct of the Marquis to herself and children, she had found it expedient to leave the castle suddenly; accompanied by Philip, and a faithful girl, she retired to an asylum in Mount Jura, where she had unexpectedly met with a solitary being, to whom she was solely indebted for her introduction to the ladies who had been the instruments of Providence to save her life, and preserve his.---“ I have,” concluded she, “ a long narrative to recount, but neither will my spirits, nor can your health, admit of my going through it now.”

Monsieur Bruyere sat immoveable in his chair, even his eyes were fixed with inexpressible wildness on her face; and when she stopped, he remained in the same position, as if he expected further information, to ascertain the truth of such incredible intelligence.

Observing his situation, his poor lady found it necessary to rouse him from the

inactivity of his faculties: "My dear Bruyere," said she, "your upright heart finds it difficult to believe that a man you loved and trusted should prove a villain; but the Marquis St. Juliers had a base mind, the construction of which was not legible in his face; he wore only the semblance of friendship; and when put to the proof, justified the observation, 'that when in want we try a hollow friend, we directly season him a decided enemy.'

"And this hollow friend," said Monsieur, with a deep sigh, recovering himself, "was St. Juliers.----Merciful Heaven! without temptation to prove a villain---to smile, to embrace, but to deceive---to plan my destruction in the hour of distress; wherefore was it necessary to receive me, but to betray; I could not force him to relieve me, I claimed no favours on the score of gratitude, demanded no assistance---Why then this complicated cruelty and baseness? Oh, St. Juliers! henceforth I must believe that friendship is but a name!"

Madame Bruyere gave no interruption to the emotions that burst forth in these disjointed expressions; she thought the sorrow that vented itself in words would be less injurious to his heart, but when she saw the big tear trembling in his eye, on casting a mournful look at her, she could no longer suppress her own feelings, but bursting into tears, she kissed his hand, passionately exclaiming---“Most unfortunate, most injured of mankind, take courage to bear the calamities that destroy your peace here, and look forward to a better world, where persecuted virtue is rewarded, and where baseness and ingratitude are infallibly punished!”

Unable to restrain the tide of grief that oppressed him, weakened as he was by sickness and imprisonment, he pressed her to his heart, and wept aloud on her shoulder. It was some time that they indulged in mutual sorrow; at length, as if a sudden recollection had seized him, he asked for his darling children---“You shall see them to-morrow,” said their un-

happy mother; "thank Heaven, they are all you can wish or expect, good and amiable."

Donna Elvira thought company might now relieve them, and therefore sent to know if their friends might be admitted. Madame joyfully requested their company: she had, by her communications, by seeing the distress of her husband's mind, and by endeavouring to repress the various sensations that distracted her own breast, so greatly overcharged her heart, that she longed to escape for a few moments to recover herself. On their entrance she withdrew, saying she should speedily return.

The ladies plainly observed the extreme agitation of Monsieur Bruyere; they sought by every kind attention to amuse him; and when his lady joined them, Donna Elvira, to change the current of their ideas, related her own short history, concluding in these words:

"There is no situation, no rank in life, we well know, exempt from sorrow; and

if

if no self-reproach attaches to ourselves, if we suffer the calamities of life in common with others, and such as human nature cannot escape from; if, with fortitude, we struggle against the unavoidable evils attendant on frail humanity, and rise superior to the malice and wicked machinations of our enemies—'tis then we fulfil the duties we owe to Heaven, to ourselves, and our friends.

“ The road to happiness never yet was smooth, thorns and briars will obstruct our passage, but resolution and perseverance will in time overcome every obstacle; and when we least expect it, the prospect brightens, our former labours are but slightly remembered, every difficulty sinks before us, and present pleasures are enhanced by the trouble of attainment.

“ Forgive me moralizing, my amiable friends,” concluded she, “ I wish to awaken you from a painful retrospection of misfortunes, to the comforts of your present situation. You have been sufferers by the injustice, treachery, and ingratitude

of deceitful men; neither guilt nor blame is attached to yourselves; with pure minds, you may pity the depravity of others. I trust, henceforth, that sorrow will be banished from your bosoms, and that Providence, by conducting you to this kingdom, has ensured both my happiness and yours."

"Generous lady!" cried Monsieur Bruyere, "I feel the extent of my obligations to you, and these ladies also; but we are bankrupts in every thing but words, and those feeble testimonies are frequently so misapplied, so foreign to the heart, that I will not insult you by such equivocal proofs, as are but too often mere empty sounds——Your own feelings must speak for me."

"They do," answered Elvira; "and I can translate your's by your eyes. However, to end at once this chapter of favours and obligations, know that I am determined to seize the opportunity Heaven has benignly thrown in my way, of making

making my future days happy by the pleasure of contributing to yours.

"From this hour I adopt your dear children as mine; without family or connections myself, that have any claims upon me; (for my late dear husband's uncle is far above any views to my fortune). I must tell you that my property is immense, sufficient to satisfy your wishes, mine, and my friends."

"Of this we will talk more hereafter, and you will find I am neither so generous, nor disinterested as you may imagine; so not a word in answer." She saw tears stealing down the cheeks of both, and was going on in a more lively strain, when Donna Violante interrupted her.

"I am glad," said she, "that you have grace enough to confess your selfishness; in truth you are a monopolizer, and have less consideration for your friends than you ought. Would you believe," said she, turning to Madame Bruyere, "that she has the cruelty to demand from me, as a proof of my regard, that I

shall renounce the pleasure of your charming society at my own house, give up you and my darling play-fellows to her, and be content to visit you here. Could any but a selfish, arbitrary, monopolising woman, demand or expect such a sacrifice? but I will not relinquish my claim as your *first* friend, though I have not equal powers to prove myself your *best*."

"Nor will I," said Donna Maria, hastily, "we may fail in the execution, but our hearts will yield to none, in true affection for you, and your dear lovely children, whose regards I promise myself I have already secured."

All attempts at description would fall very short of the grateful feelings that overflowed the hearts of Monsieur and Madame Bruyere; the latter was more particularly affected; from certain circumstances that did not strike the others, and which indeed she earnestly desired to conceal.

The conversation did not end here, but to avoid a repetition of kind designs, and

grateful effusions, we shall only say, that the following day, at the request of Donna Elvira, who admitted of no denial; Madame, her children, and servants, were to take up their abode in her house.

“ My friends, Donna Violante and her amiable daughter,” said she, “ I consider as dearer parts of myself, we see each other every day; and I will allow you to love them, because you cannot help it; to deserve a second place in your hearts shall be my best endeavour—and I hope we shall be united in the warmest bands of friendship.”

In the evening Madame Bruyere returned with Donna Violante, who was concerned to observe an agitation in the whole frame of Madame, that bespoke a mind but ill at ease; a pale countenance, a heavy eye, and all the marks of extreme dejection. She avoided being seen to notice it, and congratulated her most fervently on the events of the day, and the prospect of her husband's recovery; “ in Donna Elvira,” said she, “ you will

find a friend and sister; open, frank, and generous, not a syllable escapes from her lips, that is not dictated by the heart; she means more than she says, when she intends an act of kindness; she will consider herself the obliged person, in being favoured with your company, and in any shape to promote the happiness of those deserving it, is to confer felicity upon herself."

"What an eulogium!" cried Madame Bruyere, "what a charming character, and how correspondent with the minds of her amiable friends—friends," added she, kissing each of their hands, "to whom I am indebted for more than life, every prospect of happiness to my husband and children."

"Add, that of your own," returned Violante, "and I shall indeed feel gratification, and thank heaven for having made me its humble instrument to promote it."

Madame sighed deeply; "every sensation of pleasure," said she, "that this heart

heart is capable of feeling, must derive its source from you." She retired, soon after, to her apartment, and ordered Philip and Janette to attend her.

She repeated, to the former, the heads of that day's occurrences, and with hesitation and great emotion, told him, how absolutely requisite it was, from the weak state of Monsieur Bruyere's health, to observe a profound silence on the horrid deception of the Marquis, and her connexion with him.

"Think not," said she, "that I intend to deceive your master, and keep him ignorant of my unworthiness, and the injury, (however innocently drawn in to wrong him) I have done to his love and honour; no, Philip, I am not capable of such deceit, nor could I bear the silent reproaches of my own heart, if I suffered him to esteem me, as a virtuous, faithful wife; but I must take my own time for the discovery, and I conjure you never to drop one suspicious word or circumstance
'till

'till I appeal to you, to corroborate my melancholy story."

"My ever honoured lady," cried the good old man, "doubt not your faithful servant's obedience to your wishes; and if I may presume to speak my opinion, I think that marriage into which you were *compelled*, I may say, solely with a view to your children's advantage, should never reach the ear of our good master—it can only tend to distress his mind."

"My good Philip," said she, "you forget that the circumstance is well known to my children, and that 'tis impossible to suppose, but what it will strike their minds, young as they are, as an extraordinary affair; and without knowing they do wrong, they may mention such occurrences as cannot fail to infuse suspicion, and require an explanation."

"No, my friend," added she, "I will not trust to chance, nor will I tutor my children to observe secrecy, or persevere in a kind of negative falsehood. The moment

ment I can unfold the business without danger to your master's health, and engage a promise essential to my peace; silence, on my part, would then become criminal. All I wish or expect from you and Janette is to wait my time, and 'till then, let every circumstance that passed in the castle, remain unknown."

Both servants assured her of their perfect obedience, and she rejoiced the heart of Philip by telling him, he was the following day to attend his master.

Mean time, the mind of Monsieur Bruyere was tortured by a thousand painful ideas; he was extremely shocked to observe the great alteration in his lady's person, pale, thin, and languid, her fine features were no longer animated by health or spirits; her charming bloom was fled, and there remained only a thin shadowy appearance of that beautiful form, once so universally admired. He saw she had suffered much, and dreaded lest her health had received such a shock, as it might never more recover.

Then

Then, the baseness of an old obliged friend, started to his view; the treachery and ingratitude of St. Juliers, almost exceeded credibility; for having not the most distant idea of the unwarrantable passion the Marquis had conceived for his wife, he could assign no cause for that excess of wickedness which had plunged him into the prison of the Inquisition.

Surely, thought he, he might have given us up to our fate; a few days only we could have remained with him; we asked not, we wanted not, pecuniary assistance, and if he had that depravity of heart to forget past benefits, and hate the man that obliged him, why detain us, why affect a kindness he did not feel? why offer himself as the protector of my family, and send me to Lisbon with a view to get rid of me, when he well knew, a very short period was allotted for my stay in the kingdom; and that he must then be freed from my presence, without being guilty of such baseness, as makes the blood

blood freeze in my heart to believe him capable of.

Under the most tormenting inquietude he passed the night, and Donna Elvira had the pain to observe, when she made her morning visit, that his agitations, the preceding day, had been very unfavourable to his health. She remained with him some time, and by her kindness, and the arguments she deduced, from the conducting hand of Providence having so wonderfully preserved, and restored him to his family; she brought him to acknowledge that both religion and gratitude called upon him for an exertion of fortitude, and that composure necessary to establish the health and tranquillity of Madame Bruyere.

He mentioned the apprehensions that distracted him on her account. "You must allow," said Elvira, "for the anxiety, trouble, and fatigue, she has gone through; a recent dangerous illness; and her agonizing doubts of your existence, or if you existed, the improbability of your escape.

escape from the dreadful abyss into which you were plunged. It now remains with you, to sooth and tranquillize her mind; doubts and fears are no more, and if she perceives in you returning health and cheerfulness, be assured, the effect will soon produce an alteration in her; the mind and body sympathize, and when the heart is at ease, the human frame soon partakes of the benefit; health and spirits must result from peace dwelling in the bosom."

Thus did this admirable lady endeavour to give a stimulus to her patient, which she judged would have a good effect on himself, if he made exertions for the sake of his lady, who was, if possible, ten times dearer to him than ever by such uncommon proofs of her affection.

He waited with impatience to see her, and to embrace his beloved children; at length they came, and in the delightful moment of clasping them to his bosom, and seeing their charming mother, he forgot all past sufferings; 'till his transports
being

being a little abated he fixed his eyes on his wife; he shuddered—a restless night, and the most painful agitations, had increased her melancholy dejection, and given a weak trembling to her whole frame, that could but ill support the emotions of her heart, when she beheld her darling children clasped in the arms of their much loved father.

He saw she was sinking from her chair, had not the supporting arms of Donna Elvira saved her from falling; it was a temporary sensation that spread over her heart, but she did not entirely lose her senses. “Do not alarm yourself,” said Elvira, “she is already better;” and, indeed, she presently recovered; to her children, who had clung about her knees, she extended one hand, as she reached the other to her afflicted husband—“Forgive my weakness,” said she, “joy is sometimes as painful in its effects as sorrow.”

Elvira prudently shortened the present interview, to recover Madame, and give his agitations time to subside.

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His faithful much valued Philip then made his appearance, and his joyful emotions, were truly touching and gratifying to his master; they held a long conversation, Philip elucidated many particulars respecting the treachery of St. Juliers, their residence in Mount Jura; his lady's sufferings in her voyage, and her dangerous illness, with the bold step he had taken respecting the letters, and the fortunate consequences.

But although he seemed perfectly unreserved, he was careful not to drop the remotest hint that tended to give any suspicion of the Marquis's passion; and his subsequent villainy towards his revered lady.

The more Monsieur Bruyere heard of St. Juliers conduct, the more he was astonished and confounded, that a heart so black, should inhabit a form and manner so specious and deceitful—well might he, in the words of our divine poet, cry

“ ————— my trust

“ Like a good parent, did beget of him

“ A falsehood in its contrary, as great

“ As my trust was; which had indeed no limit:

“ A confidence sans bound.”

“ Who should be trusted, when one’s own
right hand is perjured to the bosom?”

From that day Madame Bruyere and her family fixed their residence with Donna Elvira, and experienced the kindest attentions of that lady. Monsieur recovered strength very slowly, yet he visibly amended, but the contrary was observable in his lady, her dejection, her weakness, encreased daily, in spite of every effort exerted by her friends, and the anxious tenderness of her husband.

The fact was, that her constitution had been gradually undermined from the hour she had received intelligence of her husband’s death. ’Tis possible that her duty and love for her children, might have overcome the sorrow that had at first its usual effects upon the body; but the subsequent

sequent events that took place in the castle, and the last information she obtained from the Countess, fixed a pain in her heart never to be removed.

With the highest sense of female honour, and the most delicate sensibility; the warmest affection and respect for an adored husband; she had acceded to a union she could not avoid, to ensure a protector to her children. To find herself deceived, betrayed, and a victim to the most infamous of mankind; deeply resenting the wrongs done to his unsuspecting friend, yet compelled to hide the painful secret that oppressed her mind; shrinking from the tenderness of this beloved husband, yet anxious to conceal her distress, and preserve his peace, so necessary to the restoration of his health: such were the variety of painful sensations, such the accumulated misery, that overcame the little fortitude she had struggled to exert, and hourly gave additional pangs to her heart.

The third day after Donna Violante
had

had lost her guests, her brother, the Count de Sylves, arrived from the country; his first enquiry was for Madame Bruyere, and he gained a full account of preceding circumstances, accompanied with the tears of both ladies; who were convinced that amiable and unfortunate woman was sinking to the grave, a victim to the deceptive treachery of the vile Marquis, and her too delicate sense of honour.

The Count, who had been quite fascinated by the charms and interesting manners of Madame Bruyere; who had felt warmer sensations in her favour, than he had ever experienced for any other woman; was inconceivably shocked at this account, and though, at that moment, no selfish views entered his heart, he could not forbear exclaiming—"As even the recovery of Monsieur is not certain, I cannot refrain from wishing, she had never again met with her husband!"

"Indeed, my dear uncle," said Donna Maria, "however dearly we love his charming

charming wife, 'tis impossible not to esteem Monsieur Bruyere, and feel equally as much interest for his distresses, and apprehensions, as we do for her melancholy and weakness."

He made no reply, but readily accepted his sister's offer of attending them to Elvira's, where they were engaged to pass the day. He was received with pleasure by that lady, who could hardly forbear congratulating him on his being freed from the galling fetters that had so long impeded him from tasting any pleasures of life; but she checked her thoughts, and contented herself with saying, she had never been more happy to see him, than at this time.

On their enquiry for the invalids, she shook her head, and with a look of real concern, answered, "after you left us last night, and Madame Bruyere had taken leave of her husband and retired with me, she had two fainting fits that alarmed me greatly; owing, I am convinced, to the strong exertions she makes to conceal
her

her encreasing disorder from the unfortunate Bruyere, who watches with restless anxiety every look and motion: the restraint she struggles to put on her feelings overpower her weak frame, and are very injurious to her."

"Good God!" cried the Count, "has she no advice?" "The best in the city," answered Elvira, "the physician has just left them; he said, 'the gentleman was gaining strength, though very slowly, but the lady, he was sorry to say, lost hers very rapidly, and he greatly apprehended she was in a dangerous way, the disorder being apparently as much fixed on her spirits as on her constitution.'"

Much affected by this unfavourable opinion, they followed Elvira to Monsieur Bruyere's apartment; he was holding his lady's hand, his eyes tenderly fixed on her pale languid countenance; Henrietta held the other hand, whilst Henry was standing before her tying a bouquet of flowers, which he had been selecting for his dear mamma.

“What a charming family picture!” cried Violante, affecting a gay air, to conceal her feelings; “my dear Madame Bruyere, my brother is come to pay his respects to you, and to have the honour of being introduced to Monsieur.” A polite answer was returned, and the Count introduced.

They passed above two hours in conversation, and when they retired to another room, the Count had so much candour and generosity, as to acknowledge to his niece, that Monsieur Bruyere was uncommonly sensible and pleasing, “With my whole soul I pity him,” said he, “he is, I believe, deserving the treasure that I fear will soon elude his grasp; my heart bleeds to see that charming woman so greatly altered, never did I feel so much interest for any one before; she will soon be an angel,” added he, in a faltering voice, “but the monster whose atrocious wickedness has destroyed such a woman, and wrecked the happiness he was bound by every tie to preserve and promote—that wretch

wife, that a knowledge of her misfortune, would not for a single moment depreciate her in his eyes, or lessen her influence over his heart.

“ His hatred for the unworthy author of her wrongs, must encrease; but those wrongs that press so heavy upon her, would render her more dear and respectable, from the motives that influenced her, to become the innocent victim of such unprecedented arts, as a good mind was incapable of suspecting.”

“ I urged her on this point,” answered Violante, “ the evening before she left me; and conjured her to determine either to bury the whole affair entirely from the knowledge of her husband; or to communicate it at once, that the doubts of her mind might not distract her; and gave my opinion similar to yours of her husband’s feelings on the discovery.”

She told me, she was come to a resolution to acquaint him with every circumstance, but it must be at her own time, and when both were better prepared to endure

endure the horrid tale. I had no right to urge her farther, and I fear she looks forward to a very melancholy hour to make the disclosure, which Heaven avert for a long, long time."

All present sincerely joined in this wish, and felt the tenderest compassion and esteem for this unfortunate pair.

Whilst Monsieur and Madame Bruyere remained in this weak fluctuating state, mutually distressed, yet mutually silent, from the apprehension of giving pain by making any enquiries; and experiencing from their anxious friends every attention, affection, power, or money could procure—we will look back at the castle of St. Juliers, where we left its master in the enjoyment of his best wishes with the incomparable Mademoiselle Corthouse.

The Marquis St. Juliers from an early habit in vice, and the practice of a long course of deception, had none of those troublesome feelings that sometimes sting the bosom of less experienced deceivers.

To follow the lead of pleasure, and gratify every depraved wish of his heart, had been his constant study. How he imposed on the guileless unsuspecting Bruyere has been seen; and when by his generous friendship he attained the means of going to Lisbon, he found it convenient still to wear the same veil of hypocrisy, for his uncle was a man of morals and integrity.

He was obliged therefore to satisfy his vicious passions secretly, and often cursed the tough constitution of his worthy relation, that held him under a yoke he longed to be rid of, for though dissimulation was natural to him, his pride and his spirit panted to be free, and obtain the homage of the less fortunate.

His wishes were at length gratified, and he was left master of a very fine estate, and some large sums of money, the latter was remitted to France; he had an estate there, he had never seen, and had heard wonders of Paris, which he longed to behold. As for Bruyere, his friendship
and

and favours were entirely forgotten; his memory was seldom refreshed by any recollection of obligations that wounded his pride and self-consequence.

His arrival, and subsequent conduct, we have already noticed; and 'tis certain he had now and then felt some unpleasant twitches from a monitor he had been always accustomed to repulse, and stifle in its approaches; for his unparalleled baseness to Monsieur and Madame Bruyere.

Far from seeking after that lady when she left the castle, he rejoiced to lose sight of one he had so greatly injured; and entirely taken up with his new passion, he gave himself no concern what might become of her and her children; perfectly convinced the husband could trouble him no more, he laughed at the impotent resentment of a woman, who had no means to revenge herself.

Mademoiselle Corthouse appeared as lady commandant of the castle; the father as head steward, received, and disbursed

all money concerns; and the happy Marquis, neither plagued by tenants, nor troubled about his estates, gave himself up to love, and the full enjoyment of pleasure, which he was now determined to seek at Paris.

Great preparations were made for this delightful journey. Mademoiselle, however, insisted upon one little preliminary; she would be introduced as the Marchioness St. Juliers, nay she hinted that he ought to give her a legal claim to the title; but to this last desire he proved a little refractory. He had married and introduced his former lady, and though he had given out that she was eloped from him, yet he could not marry another.

Such was his unanswerable reply; though, in fact, he had an utter aversion to the thoughts of marriage, not chusing any ties that might claim a right to restrain his roving inclinations. He had no other way to obtain the possession of Madame Bruyere, and was well aware he could get freed from the connexion when-

ever

ever he chose to acknowledge its illegality; but to marry Mademoiselle was entirely out of the question, though he had too much gallantry and passion at this time to refuse her the compliment of his title.

This point settled, though not exactly as the lady wished, yet so as to gratify her pride, they set off in great pomp for the capital, the very day subsequent to that on which Madame Bruyere left mount Jura.

To follow them in their career of pleasure, dissipation, and extravagance is not necessary; the lady had, in the most expensive style, every appendage she required to support her consequence. Her shewy person, forward manners, and handsome entertainments soon drew a crowd about them; and the Marquis flattered by the attentions paid to her, became extravagantly fond, and unreasonably jealous.

The last was a new passion, and he felt it in excess; to keep her affection, he ran into the most unbounded expence, and by gratifying her vanity thought to secure

her heart. Bold and artful she soon perceived the encrease of her power, and made her advantages of it; a young Prince of the blood followed the handsome Marchioness, and she made the Marquis believe he had proposed an elopement, and offered her an immense settlement.

In the first transports of rage, he was for going to the Prince, and to demand satisfaction. "For what," said she, "where are your rights? If, indeed, I was your wife, you might call it an injury, but if I am to live as a mistress, the world will think me justified in accepting the best terms, if it suits my inclination."

"Cruel girl," returned he, "have I not given you my name, do not the world believe that you are my wife?"

"But *I know* to the contrary," answered she, "and know also, that I have now an offer so honourable and advantageous, that I should be an idiot indeed to lose, without

without a valuable compensation in return."

"I thought you loved me." "So I do," returned she, "but, you know, there is a sort of duty one owes to one's self, not to let the golden opportunity pass by, which assures one a brilliant establishment for life: however, to prove my love, I make you this offer, marry me here privately, make me a settlement becoming your wife, and I will renounce the Prince, and every other offer; and that will be no inconsiderable sacrifice to you, since however handsomely you may settle on me, 'twill fall short of what I may expect from him."

The blind infatuated Marquis became the dupe of this artful creature, believing implicitly every syllable she had said; distracted with the fear of losing her, however repugnant to his heart, and contrary to his former determined resolution, he consented to marry her immediately.

Every requisite preparation was privately made, she took care to have the settlements to her own mind; and in a few

days after they were secretly united, her maid servant being the only witness, but she had proper testimonies of the ceremony from the father who married them, and a friend of his.

Arrived now to the summit of her wishes, she did not neglect letting Monsieur Corthouse know of her elevation; and he, in the pride of his heart, communicated it to all the neighbourhood, telling every body that the first marriage had been illegal, the lady's former husband being alive, to whom she was returned.

The Marquis was so little beloved, and the Corthouse family so greatly despised from their insignificance, vanity and impudence, that almost every one rejoiced to hear of a marriage that would sufficiently mortify him, and from his known dissipated character, would, it was supposed, be a source of misery to her.

For a few days the new Marchioness behaved with something like love and gratitude, and he was the most transported

man alive; but short-lived were his transports. Her doors were open to all the world, the Prince among the rest, perfectly unconscious of the advantages derived to the lady by his visits.

Balls, suppers, play, and every excess were introduced daily; the Marquis, who found himself but a second person in his house, mildly ventured to remonstrate a little on the heavy demands made on his purse, also at the continued attentions of the Prince; she answered haughtily, "that the noble personage did them considerable honour, that she came to Paris with a design to enjoy every pleasure, and she advised him to do the same."

What this proud wicked man felt on seeing himself the dupe of an abandoned woman, and all his own arts turned upon himself, cannot easily be described; rage and indignation roused him into the coarsest upbraidings, and bitterest reproaches; she let the torrent roll, and when he was exhausted, she answered him with the most contemptuous calmness,

ness, "that *as yet* he had nothing to complain of, but it depended upon his own behaviour, how long she might observe her present complaisance."

He stamp't with fury, and declared he would no longer supply her excessive extravagance. Smiling with an air of scorn, "have you not given my father unlimited power over your estates? have you not also ordered him to furnish me with whatever sums I may demand? Come, come, Marquis," added she, seeing he had thrown himself into a chair, utterly confounded at her assurance, and his own folly; "do not make yourself ridiculous, I am willing to live with you on good terms, but I know my power, and will make good use of it."

"What a cursed dupe have I been!" cried he. "Phoo, nonsense," said she, "I like you very well, we may live like turtles, if you conduct yourself as you ought—enjoy every thing as I do, and depend upon it we shall be very happy." She left him to ruminate at leisure on her good advice.

After

After a variety of passions, and turning in his mind the folly and imprudence he had been guilty of in marrying her, and also for having placed himself so absolutely in the power of the father; convinced too, that though she used him like the idiot she had so artfully played with, to wind round her fingers at pleasure, that he could not bear to part with her; he saw no possible way to better himself, and thought there might be a chance by falling in with her present humour, that she would grow weary of pleasure, and return to him again. Having from necessity made up his mind, he met her with a smiling countenance, saying, that he would gladly make every sacrifice to her happiness---she triumphed in her success, and from that hour, he followed her lead in every dissipation.

Play was then the ruling fashion, and therefore the Marchioness St. Juliers had constant parties, though she did not neglect now and then sacrificing a few hours to the tender devoirs of the Prince, and openly appeared adorned with his expensive presents;

sents; but she had now so completely established her rule over her husband, and engaged him in an infatuation for play, and every expensive amusement; she had brought him to be ashamed of avowing that jealousy, which, she said, lessened his own consequence, and would make them both extremely ridiculous; that he was compelled to conceal his vexation, and assume a tranquillity he did not feel.

Thus mortified, provoked, and disappointed, he endeavoured to bury his chagrin in his own bosom, secretly execrating her ingratitude, and his own preposterous delusion; he now gave himself up entirely to play, determined to gratify one passion at least, that of avarice.

But in this amusement he was yet a novice, having had few opportunities of acquiring such knowledge in the life time of his uncle, and being pretty much engaged in other pursuits since his return to France, his skill in the science of play, was by no means a match for those gentlemen who made a profession of it; consequently he became

became a dupe here again, and lost immense sums.

His lady, who knew less than himself of any games of chance, was also continually stripped, and though often supplied by her gallants, she made such large demands upon her dear papa for money, that joined to the wants of the Marquis, Monsieur Corthouse thought they were playing the devil at Paris; and it behoved him, when obliged to raise such large sums, to be a little provident for himself.

Thus three rapacious persons drawing one way, quickly produced a derangement in the affairs of the Marquis, but which Monsieur, the faithful steward, did not think it necessary to disturb the happy pair with a recital of, for the present.

In this pleasing ignorance, pursuing with avidity his avaricious amusement, (if continual losses and disappointments can bear such an inversion of terms) distractedly fond of his unfaithful, worthless wife; jealous and miserable, without daring to complain, treated with haughtiness and neglect he so
well

well deserved, yet which his spirit and pride was deeply wounded to endure, and every hour revolted against the sufferance. In this state we will leave the Marquis to drag on a few weeks at Paris, whilst we turn our eyes back on the innocent, and unhappy victim of his crimes.

The truly unfortuate Bruyere, could no longer flatter himself with any hope that the life of his amiable wife would long hold out against the rapid encrease of her disorder, which, seated in the heart, was beyond the power of medicine to cure. He saw the growing weakness, the oppressive melancholy, which she vainly attempted to disguise under an apparent composure, and the most affecting tenderness to himself and her children.

Ignorant of that secret, which was the principal source of her inquietude and illness, he accused himself as the cause, and thought anxiety for his fate, with the fatigues she had gone through, had thus injured her constitution. Grief, and continual solicitude for her, retarded the ad-

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vance of his strength, though there was little doubt of his recovery.

The amiable, and sympathizing friends of Madame Bruyere, exhausted every effort, employed the most persuasive eloquence, in adducing arguments to reconcile her to a wish for life; certainly, they said, if she once cleared her mind from that oppressive load, and rendered that justice to herself, which her husband, friends, and every unprejudiced person, must be disposed to pay her, she might still recover—they urged her duty as a mother.

“ Ah!” cried she, with a deep sigh, one day when they had been uncommonly earnest with her—“ ah! my good friends, do not believe I rashly throw away my life, or that I am forgetful of my duties; I knew the barbed arrow had transfixed my heart before I quitted my native country; from thence arose my earnest desire to close my eyes in this city, which I believed contained the ashes of my husband; that he lives, I bow in gratitude to heaven, for my

my darling children will now have a father to protect them."

"But," said Donna Maria, "if you make no exertions to prolong your own life, how can we hope for his? you see his sufferings, the sorrow that is almost insupportable, when he views your languid frame——Ah! Madame, spare him, spare your children and friends that bitter stroke, a little resolution on your side, may yet suspend, if not entirely avert."

"Be not deceived my dear Maria," answered she, "neither is in my power, the blow is given; I do nothing to accelerate my death, nor can I ward off the inevitable hour; let me entreat you to drop the subject, do not sadden the hours so precious to me in your company, by unavailing persuasions or regrets—my life is in the disposal of God, and I wait the close of it, with patience and submission."

Brushing off a few tears, she added, "let me now beseech you all, to transfer your generous affection, for an unfortunate stranger, who will remember your
good-

goodness to the last hour of her life; bestow your tenderness, and friendship, on my beloved husband and children; comfort and support him, and add your kind attentions to preserve my dear, my darling children, in the paths of virtue and honour—heaven will bless you in your last hours, for your noble charity to the unfortunate—” She stopt, overcome by the emotions that swelled her bosom, and sinking on the neck of Donna Elvira, wept aloud.

In this situation they were surprised by the Count de Sylves; shocked at a scene of such general distress, he stopt, as if irresolute whether he ought to advance or not. “My brother,” said Donna Violante; Madame Bruyere raised her drooping head, and taking the supporting arm of Donna Maria, she bowed to him, and feebly crept out of the room.

“Dear suffering excellence!” cried Donna Elvira, “my heart bleeds for her unhappy husband, *she* will soon be superior to compassion, though an object of eternal regret.”

“What then,” cried the Count, “do
you

you believe her past recovery, absolutely in danger? my God! is there no hopes?" "Alas! my brother, no," said Violante, "I told you some time since, that I feared all remedies would be ineffectual to save her, and within this last week, you must have seen a visible alteration gaining ground." "O," said he, "What an infernal villain is that Juliers, his soul will endure endless torments, for his base crimes against this angel of a woman! poor Bruyere! what a loss is his!" He drew forth his handkerchief to his eyes, and flew out of the room.

The ladies looked expressively at each other, but neither spoke, and they followed Madame Bruyere to her husband's apartment.

The following day after this scene, the whole party were assembled in the anti-chamber of Monsieur Bruyere; Donna Elvira drawing a sealed packet from her pocket, put it into the hands of Madame; "my loved friend," said she, "open, and peruse that at your leisure; I have this

morn-

morning given the Count de Sylves a copy of it, which I entrust with him.

"Do not look on me with such sweet earnestness," added she, "I have by an act of duty, endeavoured to render myself worthy of your friendship; your approbation will stamp me into consequence with myself, and I know the goodness of your heart will applaud that action in another, who, emulous to copy your virtues, presumes to claim an interest in those most dear to you."

She rose, kissed the hand of Madame Bruyere, and withdrew. "I already anticipate the generous contents of this packet," said Madame Bruyere, with much emotion, "tell me, dear Count, am I mistaken, has not this most noble woman been making some provision for our children?"

"You judge perfectly right," answered he, "she has honoured herself by repairing in some degree, the injustice of mankind; she is happy in being permitted to consider herself as a second mother to your lovely children; and to concur with you, in securing
to

to them that respect they are by birth entitled to—I have the honour of being joined in a trust, that will afford me pleasure to fulfil in the strictest sense; Monsieur Bruyere is my coadjutor.”

The happy, and much obliged parents, felt the generous delicacy of Donna Elvira, beyond the force of language to express; grateful tears bedewed their cheeks; they were conscious of no degradation in receiving favours from a hand so liberal, a heart so noble.

“Permit me to observe,” said the Count, touched by their affecting silence, “that our friend makes it her earnest request, that you will avoid all conversation alluding to this affair; she knows your hearts, and extreme sensibility; she flatters herself hers is in unison with yours, and thus acquainted with each other, all words on the subject would be superfluous.”

“Fear not,” said Madame Bruyere, “I will not pain her with cold expressions of gratitude, that are incapable of conveying the warmth of my sentiments---we feel, as we ought, the value of her friendship; heaven

heaven grant," added she with fervor, "that our dear children may prove deserving of her favour, that they may be worthy to call their benefactress by the endearing name of mother."

She gave the packet to her husband, "we will read it together to-morrow," said she, "the contents might possibly now agitate me more than I wish for; we meet here to be cheerful."

Donna Elvira returned soon after, Madame Bruyere embraced her in silence, Monsieur kissed, and pressed her hand to his bosom---tears stood in their eyes, and she was infinitely more gratified by this mute acknowledgment of their satisfaction, than by a redundancy of words, humiliating to the obliged, and painful to the ear of a generous obliger.

When the contents of this deed, so handsomely given by Elvira, came to be known, the grateful parents found the liberal lady had considered her own ample fortune, in the present she had secured be-

yond a possibility of recal, from that day, to each of the children.

The money was placed in the joint names of Monsieur Bruyere, and the Count de Sylves, in trust for the young folks; the interest to commence immediately, and to be paid regularly into the hands of Monsieur.

This delicate mode of conveying assistance to them, was correspondent with other acts of beneficence, and she made it her particular request, that they might all live together as one family.

“Now then,” said Madame Bruyere, lifting her eyes in thankfulness to heaven, “now I shall die with resignation, and my last hours will be peaceful; my husband, my children will no more know want or sorrow.”

“Die,” exclaimed Monsieur Bruyere, “cruel Louisa! can you talk so composedly of dying, of tearing from me every thing that makes life desirable, and exult in the idea that I shall be exempt from sorrow!

sorrow! unjust, unkind Louisa! Oh! if my happiness is dear to you, live, live my best, my only love, to bless me and your children---I cannot, indeed I cannot survive you." He covered his face, and sunk upon her bosom. "'Tis I," he cried, "'tis I have murdered you!"

Madame Bruyere was inexpressibly shocked at this accusation of himself; she had for the two last days felt such an encreasing weakness, a kind of languid stupor at times, that intimated to her the hour was rapidly advancing that would part them for ever; and she had been endeavouring to collect courage to disclose that secret which had put the finishing stroke to her misfortunes.

Affected by the situation of her beloved husband, she thought it now her duty to ease his mind from self-reproach, and make the intended communication. Rising abruptly, she requested the presence of Donna Elvira, and when that lady came, trembling, almost gasping for breath:"

"Now," said she, "is the hour arrived,

when this bosom will discharge the painful load that has so long oppressed it; assist me, support me through the horrid tale, and be a witness also to a solemn promise I must exact from my ever dear, ever beloved husband---" Turning to him, who sat regarding her with wild astonishment--- "I conjure you, in the name of heaven, to grant me one request, most essential to my peace, to the happiness of your family and friends; I flatter myself, that my heart and principles are so well known to you, that you will not scruple to engage an assent to my wishes, perfectly convinced that I dare not solicit what is improper for you to comply with."

"I do, I do promise," said he, greatly agitated, "I solemnly pledge myself to observe your request in its strictest sense--- O, my Louisa, can you ask any thing that admits a doubt of my compliance!"

"My dearest Bruyere," resumed she, after a moments pause, "prepare to hear the most heart-wounding tale, your injuries, your poor Louisa's wrongs; hear with
with

with compassion, but with no sentiments of revenge."

She entered into a brief detail of the various circumstances that had taken place at the castle; in consequence of the report the Marquis had made of his death; and though she was obliged several times to pause, and break off in her narrative, from weakness and painful reflection, he never once interrupted her. His emotions cannot be described, often he raised his eyes, his hands to heaven, and sometimes covered his face. She shortened the piercing story as much as possible, and concluded with these words:

"You now know the extent of *my* misery, the involuntary crime that has deprived me of every hope in this life; you have solemnly engaged to grant the request so necessary to my tranquillity; this, then, is the request, this, the last favour I shall ever ask, or you can bestow; that you never seek to revenge our injuries on that most detestable monster, who has ruined our happiness; leave him to heaven, and

the punishment of future reflection, and he will be *amply* punished; for conscience will one day speak horrors to his mind.

“ You are a father, the care of your children is your first obligation, live then for them; as a proscribed man, you rush on certain death if you return to France. The Marquis St. Juliers is the most ungrateful, unprincipled of villains; shall the life of a good man be put in the hazard with his? can even the death of this wretch so worthless, be any atonement for the wrongs he has done us? No; let him live, believe me, existence will be his curse, and the hand of heaven is sufficient to punish him in its own good time—I call upon you, therefore to abide by your promise, to assure me that you will never seek to revenge my injuries, by engaging in any contest with the Marquis St. Juliers; this assurance can alone soften the approaching hour, when we part in this world, and waft me in peace and resignation to those realms of bliss where I trust we shall one day meet to part no more !”

Clasping

Clasping her to his bosom, with unutterable tenderness, he wept like a child, her tears mingled with his; when his agitations permitted him to speak—"Oh! my Louisa," cried he, "why have you suffered this painful secret to corrode your heart, and destroy your health! my dear angelic, injured wife! could you doubt the justice, the love of your Bruyere? Alas! your too delicate sensibility has destroyed you, and robbed me of every hope of future peace."

Again he sunk upon her bosom, then turning to Donna Elvira, whose sympathizing tears flowed down her cheeks—"ah! Madame," said he, "you know not the value of the treasure that is torn from me; such a wife, a mother so excellent, a woman so superior! oh my God! spare her, spare her to her wretched husband!"

His extreme agony was too much for Madame Bruyere, she sunk fainting from his arms, and he fell back in his chair almost lifeless; Donna Elvira, calling the servants, with much difficulty restored

both, and telling them a temporary separation of a few hours was absolutely necessary, Madame without speaking, or resistance, was conveyed to another apartment, where Violante, who had arrived a few minutes before, attended her; Donna Elvira remained with Monsieur.

“My friend!” exclaimed he, grasping her hand, “take care of my angel wife, dearer to my soul than in the first hour that gave her to my arms, for I knew not then half her excellence: and this wife,” cried he, beating his breast, “I have destroyed through my confidence in the most abandoned of mankind! Gracious heaven! why should man be a volunteer in wickedness? why had he not spurned me from his door? I could not compel him to assist me; why seek my life, and destroy the honour of my wife? such complicated crimes! the villain, O, the detested, ungrateful villain!”

Elvira endeavoured to sooth where she could not comfort: she besought him to spare poor Madame Bruyere the sight of his

his agonies, which her weak frame was ill-calculated to bear; to assure her he would strictly keep his engagement, and resolve from that hour no more to dwell on past scenes, but, by tenderness and composure, infuse into her mind that tranquillity so essential to her health.

"I will," said he, affectingly, "I will obey you, I will stifle my own feelings, that I may not wound hers; words indeed but ill express them—O, should I live to send my children from me, what a lesson have I to give, a terrible example of juvenile imprudence, and the great importance it is to be guarded in our early friendships.

"My ill-judged selection, my imprudent attachment to a base wretch in early youth; and unsuspecting confidence in ripeness, against circumstances that ought to have convinced me of his worthlessness, have been the cause of this load of misery that now oppresses me, and my poor injured Louisa, she is the victim, the innocent victim! my God! grant me patience under thy decrees!"

Donna Elvira had sent for the Count de Sylves, when she attended Madame Bruyere to the other room; his arrival was announced, and she entreated Monsieur to permit that amiable man to be his companion, to accept his friendly consolation, and not indulge in unavailing, painful retrospections, that tended only to encrease their mutual sorrows; she assured him of her affectionate care and solicitude to restore and compose Madame, to meet him a few hours hence, without being overcome by such violent emotions as were greatly injurious to both.

She left the gentlemen together, and hastened to her friend.

Equally to her surprise and pleasure, she found Madame tranquillized, and much less agitated than she had been for several days; after hearing that her loved Bruyere was composed, and with the Count; "I feel," said she, "quite a new creature, no longer deceiving my husband by retaining a secret I feared would operate so much to my

my disadvantage; assured of his unabated love, forgiveness, and pity; and resting in full confidence that he will strictly keep his word.

“My heart feels light and easy; my children will have a father, in you they will find a mother, and here, (turning to Donna Violante, and her daughter) they will meet with friends. What can the fondest expecting mother wish for more? The misfortunes that have crouded upon me in the few last months, sink now into nothing; heaven has stilled my murmuring soul, by proving that virtue and friendship still have existence in noble minds; such blessings as now cheer me, fall to the lot of few—amiable, best of women!” cried she, tenderly taking a hand of each, “heaven only can reward your goodness to the unfortunate—here, in this bosom, which throbs with grateful sensations no language can paint; here, your godlike benevolence, your images beaming with love and pity, are impressed indelibly; the hand of death cannot efface them.”

Tears which fell from every eye, stopt her voice; when Donna Elvia was capable of speaking, she urged the same request to her, that she had made to Monsieur, that they would neither of them revert to past scenes, but meet to comfort, and support each other. Madame Bruyere assured her that her spirits were already so much better that she hoped her appearance would have a good effect upon her husband's.

Through the management of Donna Elvira, the unfortunate pair, stimulated by a wish to promote the peace of each other, exerted their best endeavours to repress their mutual emotions, to appear easy and resigned; the excessive tenderness of Monsieur for his lady, seemed increased, and wore such an air of respect and anxiety, that it was impossible to see them, without being deeply affected.

Madame Bruyere had informed her faithful Philip, that he had no longer any restrictions to observe, his master knew the full extent of her misfortunes. The worthy man, who with the sincerest grief, beheld

held the visible decline of his lady, exclaimed, "Oh! my honoured Madame, take care of your precious health, and we may all be happy, for sure we are in the house with angels!"

"Love, and take care of *your good master*, my friend," said she; "once I thought my dear children would have no other protector than you, and on your integrity I relied. Heaven has restored to them a father, and most generous friends; yet, Philip, I depend upon your affection, I trust to your attachment, never to forsake them."

The affectionate creature dropped upon his knees, "never," said he, drowned in tears, "never will I forsake them whilst I have breath, unless spurned from their feet—may my last hour pass in their presence, my last breath utter blessings on your family, and my eyes close in peace, as I perform my duties to you, my master, and your beloved children."

Madame Bruyere pressed one of his uplifted hands between hers, and unable to speak,

sheak, feebly crept into another room, throwing herself into a chair, and freely indulged those emotions she could not suppress.

Several days passed after this afflictive one, and Madame Bruyere appeared to be so much more cheerful, that her husband and friends began to hope composure of mind might produce its usual effects on the body. Misled by their wishes, they scarcely noticed the encreased trembling of her frame, or oppressive difficulty that impeded her speech, both of which she exerted herself to conceal. One evening, however, after she retired to her apartment, Donna Elvira accompanying her, she sat down to her toilet, but as Janette approached to undress her, she drew two or three quick sighs, and fainted so suddenly, that she fell on the floor.

Greatly alarmed, they were incapable of raising her without assistance, and after she was laid upon the bed, and her senses returned, her heavy eyes, and short-fetched breath, so terrified her friend, that she sent

in

in great haste for the physician. He came, and after feeling her pulse, ordered some cordials to take every hour, and withdrew, with a promise of returning in the morning—Elvira glided out after him; it was the same gentleman who had attended her in her first illness.

“Tell me, Sir,” said she, “what are your hopes?” “I am sorry to say, Madame, that I have none; the poor lady has been gradually declining ever since I had the honour to see her on her first arrival in this country; she recovered then almost miraculously, but her constitution received so severe a shock, and the fixed melancholy that pervaded her bosom, have together given a fatal blow, that will soon put a period to her existence.”

“My God!” cried Elvira, “we have deceived ourselves into a false security, flattered each other from her composure, and the sweet complacency of her features, that she was getting better. Ah! Sir, why did you not before tell us that our expectations

tations would prove vain, and were delusive?"

"To pronounce a fiat, that must give you up to despair, could not possibly answer any good end," replied he, "since the only chance of lengthening her days, must be drawn from the cheerfulness of her friends; I am grieved to say, that I fear now their termination is near at hand, a day or two at most; but 'tis impossible to speak with exactness, 'till I wait on you in the morning."

Donna Elvira returned to her almost expiring friend; who had observed her to follow the physician, and saw her come back, with a face pale as death, and with a trembling step—she held out her hand; "my dear tender lady," said she, "I conjure you to be sincere and explicit, does the gentleman think I am dying? Speak, do not temporize; I wish once more to see my husband and children—shall I send for them directly?"

"No," replied Donna Elvira, collecting

ing a degree of firmness, from despair and necessity, "no, not this night, the physician will be here in the morning early; do not give them unnecessary alarm; wait till you have seen him"—Madame Bruyere fixed her eyes earnestly upon her, and in a solemn tone; "you would not, I am sure, deceive, or disappoint me—I do not think, *myself*, that I am actually dying, but I firmly believe I shall never again leave this room alive.

"I hope," said she, after a pause, observing Elvira could not suppress audible marks of sorrow, "I hope I leave this world without any regrets; the dear ties of nature twine about my heart, my husband, my children cling to my thoughts, which perhaps ought to be weaned from all earthly concerns; but I trust heaven will pardon their wandering on those beloved objects, whom I think of with pleasure, in the protection of the worthiest of women; all my rights in them I bequeath to you."

Seeing that Donna Elvira was speechless from grief, she pressed her hand to her lips.

"Do

“Do not,” said she, “wound me by these marks of sorrow; consider how necessary it is at this hour, that I should be composed, and feel no reluctance to resign a life heaven is pleased to recal—to part with a husband, children, and *such friends*, is a painful struggle to expiring nature; but the inevitable hour *must* come; assist me therefore to obtain that resolution, to feel that submission to the divine decrees, which becomes my situation; strengthen *my* weakness, and inspire me with fortitude by *your* example!”

“Forgive me,” said Elvira, “if my selfish sorrow gives you pain, you have given *me a lesson* I will endeavour to observe: and here, on my knees, in the presence of the Divine Author of our being, I solemnly engage to consider your children as my own, to provide for them as such; and to receive them from your hands, as a sacred trust, for which I am accountable to heaven, and their parents.”

“Enough, my dearest friend,” cried Madame Bruyere, in a faltering voice; and turning

turning her head aside to hide her emotions, she besought her to retire. Without distressing her by a refusal, she had the bed-curtains drawn, made a feint to leave the room, but softly returned, and seated herself at a distance from the bed, where she could not be seen.

The poor lady did not sleep, but lay tolerably quiet; she spoke once or twice to Janette, thanked her for her fidelity, and assured her those excellent friends who protected her children, would not neglect her faithful servants; "and your dear master," added she, "will regard you for my sake."

Towards morning she fell into a profound sleep that lasted above four hours, during which time Elvira had sent for her friends, and communicated to them her situation, and the physician's opinion. They were deeply affected, and more surprised than they ought to have been, had they not flattered themselves with false hopes. The ladies remained impatiently expecting the doctor, who came within a few minutes after

after she waked, and had spoken to Jannette, demanding how long she had slept.

They entered her apartment together; she held out her hand with a sweet smile to her friends; the physician having felt her pulse, she looked earnestly at him—

“I entreat you, Sir, to speak without reserve, is not my last hour near at hand? Don't hesitate, I hope I am no coward,

for I have long expected it.” “I presume not,” answered he, “to pronounce decisively, yet, I fear, a day or two at most——”

“Perhaps sooner,” said she. “It is impossible to say,” returned he.

“The Almighty Will be done,” said she, with fervor.

“My dear friends, 'tis now you must prepare my Bruyere, and my children, to take their last farewell; the sooner the better, that I may have some time to myself undisturbed by sorrow, that I may recover from the pangs of such a parting.”

The physician withdrew to visit Monsieur Bruyere; the ladies, who saw a beautiful colour on her cheek, though her eyes

were

were heavy and sunken; who heard her speak distinctly, though her breath was short; could scarcely be persuaded to think her dissolution so near as the doctor had pronounced.

She asked if she could be taken up, dressed, and carried into her husband's room. Unwilling to make an objection to what seemed to be her wish, they prepared to assist her; but she had no sooner been taken from the bed than she fainted, and had three successive fits; with difficulty she was replaced, and restored.

When she could speak, "I see," said she, in a low and tremulous voice, "I see, that I am unable to rise; I must go through it here. My good friends, go; prepare him, comfort and support him."

Donna Maria remained with her, speechless, and drowned in tears, whilst her mother and Donna Elvira went to Monsieur. "O," said she, to Maria, "how I dread this last scene; my too tender husband can ill bear this separation; heaven,

ven, I trust, will strengthen him with resignation and fortitude."

She was silent some time, looking towards the door, greatly agitated; at length it opened, and poor Monsieur Bruyere appeared, supported by the physician and Donna Violante; pale, trembling, almost sinking to the earth, he was placed in a chair, close by her side, not a syllable being spoken by any one.

He looked at her for a moment, then breaking the affecting silence, he cried, in a convulsive voice—"Is it come to this! Have I emerged from the dungeon of death to see this hour of misery! O, my Louisa! my darling wife! is it come to *this*!" he repeated, looking up to heaven with inexpressible anguish.

"And to *this*," said she, "this hour, of hope and exultation to the good, of terror and despair to the wicked, must all mankind arrive. What is the account of a few years in this transitory life, to the boundless prospect of eternity! My ever dear

dear husband, cease your unavailing grief; rejoice that I die, as to intention, free from any crimes that might otherwise appal me in this last solemn scene. My last breath will be drawn in peace, free from anxiety for you and my children; it will expire in humble confidence of our being united hereafter in never-ending bliss."

"O, thou angelic woman, best of wives, ornament of thy sex! Thus, so soon to leave me—brought so early to the grave, a pure victim to my weak folly, and the vile arts of a villain. O righteous heaven! send forth thy thunder bolts, let forked lightnings dart upon his head, and crush that base, ungrateful wretch——" "Hold, hold, my beloved Bruyere; spare your imprecations; in its own good time heaven will punish the guilty. Poor wretch! what will be his feelings, what his sufferings, when this hour overtakes him, and the dread monitor within stings him to the heart! Miserable man! I forgive him—Do you also remember the solemn promise you have given me——Live, for your dear

dear children, for these incomparable friends."

Faint and exhausted, she was silent, her eyes fixed on the agonized Bruyere, his hand held between her's. She saw the dreadful conflict of his soul, and wished to shorten this painful interview.

"You will oblige me by retiring," said she; "receive my tenderest acknowledgments for all your kind, unbounded love, and confidence; 'tis my pride and comfort to have deserved them, for you ever were dear to my heart. You only possessed it; my last sigh can alone extinguish my affection."

He attempted to rise, to speak, but overcome by a thousand tender, mournful, emotions, sunk back in a state of insensibility; and in that condition, at the request of his expiring wife, he was carried to his own apartment!

In a short time she heard he was recovered, that the Count de Sylves was with him, and would not leave him. She rejoiced at this, and thanked heaven one
of

of the most painful strokes of death was passed.

Some hours after she saw her children ; it was a moment of extreme agony, and a most affecting scene to her friends. She gave them to the arms of Elvira, saying, " When I am gone, *that* is your mother ; love, obey her, as you have done me, then the Almighty will bless you, and the spirit of your mother in heaven will rejoice." The moment of parting was dreadful, it shook her fortitude, and she lay for more than an hour incapable of speaking, her eyes directed towards heaven, her lips moving, as if imploring its protection for those darling objects, whose tears and tender expressions pierced her very soul.

After some time she grew more composed, and continued not worse throughout the day. She firmly refused again to see her husband ; and the Count prevailed upon him, with much difficulty, to comply with her injunctions. He remained

on the bed a prey to the most poignant grief, and heart-rending reflections.

About midnight the friends perceived a visible alteration, several faintings brought her so low, that her voice could scarcely be heard; she was sensible that the moment drew near that would translate her pure spirit to heaven.

She invoked blessings on her husband, her children, her friends, and faithful servants; she had seen and taken leave of poor Philip, who retired with a broken heart. She recommended him and Jannette to Monsieur Bruyere, and to Elvira, as the supporters and preservers of her and her children.

She drew Elvira near to her—"In my cabinet," said she, "you will find a letter to you, and two enclosures; at a proper time deliver them; that time I leave to your discretion." Soon after this she faintly blessed and thanked them all—her voice failed, she lay upwards of an hour composed, a sweet smile diffused over her face,

face, her eyes alternately directed to heaven and to her friends, who hung over her, stifling *their* grief, not to disturb her last moments—when suddenly she drew one deep fetched sigh, and expired without a struggle or a groan! Such was the conclusion of a well spent life; such the end of a woman possessed of every virtue, adorned with every charm and excellence, who at the early age of seven and twenty, was hurried to a premature grave, by the base machinations, the vile passions of the ungrateful St. Juliers!

Like Timanthes, in his painting the sacrifice of Iphigenia, we draw a veil over the sacred sorrows of Monsieur Bruyère, which occasioned a relapse into his former weakness; and for some time diverted the grief that oppressed his excellent friends for the death of his lady, by the anxiety they felt for him, and attention to his recovery.

The sensible, affectionate hearts of Henrietta and her brother, were more deeply affected, than could have been supposed,

for the loss of their beloved mamma: young minds rarely receive deep impressions, but those sweet children had been educated with care, were possessed of great sensibility, and seemed perfectly to comprehend the extent of their misfortune, in losing their darling mother.

A few days after her death, Monsieur Bruyere still ill, and confined to his bed, where Henry constantly attended him, Henrietta, coming from her father's apartment in tears, was met by Elvira, who led her to another room. "My sweet child," said she, "do not indulge thus in sorrow; is not your dear mamma now an angel in heaven, happy, released from pain and grief; can you wish to recal her here, where you saw her suffer so much?"

"Oh! no," cried the sweet girl, throwing herself into the arms of Elvira, "no, I love her too well for that; I know she must be happy, because she was so good; I know too that if I endeavour to be as good, I shall one day join my blessed mamma in heaven—indeed, Madame, I do
not

not grieve that *she is in heaven*, I am only sorry for myself and Henry that *we are left behind*—but you,” continued she, “*you will be our dear mamma now*; and if I do not yet love you so well, pray forgive me; I will try to do it, because you are so good, and because my angel mamma bid me obey and love you. I never will forget her commands.”

Elvira clasped the lovely girl to her arms—“Yes, my love,” said she, “I will be to you the most affectionate of mothers—ever speak freely your wishes to me; my Henrietta can ask nothing but what I shall grant with pleasure.” “I hope then,” returned she, “I shall never ask any thing improper, for I would not disoblige you for the world. I was going to my room to pray for my poor dear papa; you see how ill he is with grief. I am not doing wrong to pray for his life, I hope.”

“No, my love,” answered Elvira, “go; and if heaven sees fit, your prayers will

be granted, but we must only hope; and not murmur, should we be disappointed."

The skill of the physician, the tender exertions of his friends to console and reconcile Monsieur Bruyere to bear his irreparable misfortune with submission and fortitude, added to his sense of the duty he owed to his children, enabled him, after some time, to struggle with the heart-felt sorrow that oppressed him. The deadly stroke that had pierced his bosom was too deep to admit of cure; but he endeavoured to support the painful effects in gratitude to his friends, who, with great joy, after three weeks illness, saw him gradually returning to convalescence, and that calm, dignified sorrow, which inspires respect, without distressing the feelings of one's friends.

In this state we will leave the affectionate party at Lisbon, and cast an eye back on the Marquis St. Juliers, and his incomparable lady.

We dropped them in the full career of dissipation

dissipation and fashionable manners; the lady as deeply emerged in gallantry as in play; they divided her time and affections: she had by her charms and artful management gained the full possession of the heart; and by her insolence, haughtiness, and connections, acquired an unbounded sway over the mind of the infatuated, contemptible St. Juliers.

That man, such an adept in artifice and duplicity, depraved and unrestrained in his passions, violent, and yet persevering in every point he adopted, was now the absolute slave of a mean, vicious woman, who had taken advantage of the sudden attachment which threw him into her snares, (for wicked minds will assimilate, as well as good ones) had secured to herself a title and a good settlement; and now boldly rushed into every vice, disdaining even to preserve appearances.

The miserable wretch, her husband, without spirit or inclination to break the chain that confined him, plunged into the gulph prepared for him by some discerning

sharpers, who discovered his ignorance; and to drown his vexation at her conduct, and his immense losses at play, he attached himself to the bottle, as a resource from the misery of reflection; and this vice, not common in France, rendered him despicable in the eyes of both sexes.

The large demands both his lady and himself were compelled to make on the faithful steward, Monsieur Corthouse, at length drew from him a declaration that he had mortgaged the estates to the full amount of their worth, and that the trifling sums he now sent, were every livre he could raise. Nothing remained but that estate secured to his daughter, and unless some part was sold, he should be unable to keep possession of the castle. For *his* part, he added, he could hardly credit his senses, or his own hand-writing, to see the thousands they had spent within a few months, and the ruin they had brought upon themselves.

Such were the contents of his letter, but the wary Notary omitted to mention that.

that he had kindly lent a help towards this ruin; not only by indulging the boundless demands of his daughter, which he might have resisted, but by his own *little cribbings*, which he considered as lawful plunder to reward his *care* and *fidelity*; and also as a resource in his old age, should the Marquis spend all, or, from caprice, ease him of his *laborious* employment.

This unexpected letter from her dear papa, the Marchioness read with perfect non-chalance; the Marquis with an air of astonishment and distraction.—“Impossible!” he cried, “an immense fortune like mine vanished in a few months—impossible!” “I see nothing in it that is impossible, or incredible,” replied she; “you have been the dupe of knaves, I have suffered by sharpers; we have lost an immensity between us.”

“Between us!” repeated he, gnashing his teeth; “yes, your losses have been the greatest, I believe; your boundless extravagance in dress, equipage and play——”

“Why do you not add,” said she, inter-

rupting him with a scornful sneer, "why do you not add to the catalogue, *my drunkenness*, that laid me at the mercy of every knave and fool, that condescended to win my money? How dare you," said she, in a louder key, "arraign *my vices*, when you have been a sharer in them; and by giving yourself up to drink, have rendered yourself contemptible to a proverb, and lost sums without knowing their amount."

"*This is too much!*" he exclaimed, throwing himself into a chair, for the first time conscious of his own meanness and egregious folly, and looking on her with detestation.

"I am of your opinion," said she, "'tis throwing away time to upbraid a man so insensible; but I desire you will recollect that I have some debts of honour I must discharge within four and twenty hours; and therefore that money must be procured some where."

Whilst she was speaking, he *had recollected*, that the only way to extricate himself from present difficulties, would be

by persuading her to give up her settlement made before he married her. His habitual duplicity did not forsake him in this moment of necessity.

"Let us not reproach each other," said he, smoothing his ruffled features into a look of complacency; "our mutual interest requires immediate relief; I will sell, or do whatever your good father thinks fit, to preserve our reputation and consequence; but that will take time, and we want a supply for the moment—there is but one way—if you would generously serve us both, it shall be amply restored to you."

"What is it you mean?" asked she. "It will be an easy thing to obtain a sum of money here in Paris, if you would kindly lodge your settlement in the hands of the lender, as a security till I repay it."

Never was disdain and triumph so unblushingly expressed, as by this vicious, depraved creature. "So, Sir, you would rob me of my settlement; and then expect me to depend upon *your honour* for re-

storing it at your leisure. Do not believe I am to be thus imposed upon. I will however do more for you than you have the courage to request; I will lessen your expences, by taking from you that wife, whose 'dress, equipage and play,' you can no longer support."

"Confusion, madness!" cried he, "you cannot mean to desert me in this exigence. —(gathering courage)— By heaven you shall not leave me; since you no longer observe any terms with me, I will exert the authority of a husband, (curst be the hour in which I became such) and compel you to remain in this house, and comply with my demands."

"I am charmed with your spirit," returned she, laughing; "well, we shall see what schemes you will invent to supply our mutual wants; for as to my settlement, assure yourself I never will raise a livre by that means for your use. And as you are possessed of a very fertile invention, I leave you to the free exercise of it."

She

She flung out of the apartment, and left him almost petrified at her uncommon assurance; equally enraged as astonished, he called the servants, and ordered no carriage should attend her, nor any company be admitted. He had forgotten, that he had long since delegated all authority over the domestics to her, and that his commands were of little consequence in opposition to her will: they heard him, and, bowing in silence, withdrew.

Whilst he retired to his study, to consider on the exigence of his affairs, the malicious woman had sent notice to two of his creditors, that he was meditating an escape from Paris, with an intention to go over to Lisbon, where he had a very large estate. The consequence was, that in a few hours the house was surrounded by officers, with an order to take possession of his effects.

In the bustle this occasioned, the lady, whom they treated with much respect, was permitted to depart with all her trunks, and the chief officer was interrogating the
Marquis

Marquis relative to his effects, so that he was entirely unacquainted with her departure for some time.

His rage, when he learnt that she had carried off all her property, was beyond all bounds, but it availed nothing ; and all the favour he could obtain was to delay the execution of their orders till the next day, that he might have time to take measures for satisfying the present demands without his disgrace being public.

Meantime the Marchioness ordered her carriage to the hotel of the Prince de Soubise, who very gallantly opened his doors to receive her. She claimed his protection in form ; and, in a few hours, by interest and management, the lady had permission from the Queen Regent, to remain under the protection of the Prince.

The following day he had the felicity of having this pretty trick of her's communicated to him, and his sentiments on the business may be easily guessed.—Curse and execrations followed of course ; but he had no time to lose in useless exclamations,

tions, he was obliged to find some mode of settling with his creditors; and after much consultation, it was agreed that he should return to his castle, proper persons attending him, and dispose of his principal estate to pay his debts.

He wrote to Monsieur Corthouse in the bitterest terms, complaining of his base wife, and bid him prepare to settle his accounts, and resign his stewardship.

This imprudent step was the completion of his folly; for Monsieur, like a wise Notary, took his measures accordingly.—The Marquis made several attempts to see his worthless wife, but she was well protected; and all his remonstrances to controvert her malicious and false allegations, availed nothing against power and prejudice.

With a mind and body harrassed and debilitated by excesses, vexation, and the humiliation of his pride and spirit, he returned to the castle, where he was received as its master by four servants he had never before seen; only one poor stable-boy was

re-

recognised as having belonged to his family.

He asked for Monsieur Corthouse, he had left the castle four days preceding his arrival.—He desired to see the old butler, he had been turned off two months before. In short, not one old servant remained.

Confounded and amazed, he looked wildly round him, and demanded where Corthouse was gone, who had the care of his papers and books? One of the men answered, that he had the key of the study, which Monsieur sealed up, and ordered it should remain so till the Marquis arrived, but what was become of him no one knew.

He took the key, without speaking, broke open the fastenings, and unlocked the door. Books and papers were arranged on the table, with a note directed to the Marquis, in which the wise and conscientious steward told him, “His extravagance had ruined his fortune; his ill-treatment of his wife, had lost him a faithful servant,

servant, who had disbursed some of his own money to support the servants till his return. Convinced that he was undone, and that a steward was no longer a necessary person, he had withdrawn himself from an improvident master, from an unworthy son-in-law, whom he should see no more." Not to be longer prolix, we shall briefly say, that Monsieur had made his accounts out so clearly of the expenditure and remittance of all the vast sums he had raised, that though the Marquis knew they were false, he could not prove them so, and if he could, it answered no purpose.

A principal estate was soon sold to pay his debts, the castle and a small quantity of ground was all that remained to him in France, exclusive of one he had settled as a jointure on his lady; and her first settlement was secured on the castle and lands contiguous.

What was he now to do? His mind revolted against going to Lisbon; when
his

his thoughts turned that way, he shuddered at the recollection of his baseness; besides, his health was so much impaired by his various excesses, that he was incapable of going for the present. In short, he could think of no other resource against pecuniary distresses than to send over, and employ an agent to sell his estates there, and remit him the produce.

Mean time a dropical disorder gained fast upon him; the continual agitation of his mind encreased his complaints, and produced also the yellow jaundice. Under this complication he laboured without a friend, or a companion of either sex.

The young dissipated men, with whom he had formerly associated, hearing of his loss of fortune, and ill state of health, knowing neither pleasure nor profit could be derived from visits to him, entirely forsook him; and having formed no friendships or acquaintance with more worthy characters, no such came near his castle. He was thus deserted, destitute and wretched

wretched—an insulated being, without one cheering thought, one comforting reflection.

It was now that he experienced every species of horror attached to a life so dissolute and wicked, when retrospection on past scenes presented to his view the whole tenor of his conduct; where duplicity, baseness, ingratitude, and treachery had marked every action of his life.

The wrongs of the unfortunate Bruyere, that early friend, the benefactor of his youth, whom he had betrayed and sacrificed; whose amiable, unoffending wife he had dishonoured, and ruined in her peace for ever; on this worthy, ill-fated pair, whom he was bound to protect and serve, by every tie of gratitude and honour, he had heaped destruction and misery. He had returned their friendship and confidence, with unexampled treachery, and the most atrocious actions.

The unhappy wretch shuddered at the reflection, he endeavoured to drive them from his remembrance; it was a vain attempt:

tempt: now, in the hour of sickness, when riot and dissipation no longer engaged him in busy scenes that precluded thought, he could not ward off the stings of a reproaching conscience, that goaded him every moment worse than a scorpion's sting, there the body only felt a pang, how light such sufferings to the "mind diseased!"

All his rage and upbraidings against the woman, whose arts had drawn him into his present distresses, were now silenced by the severe but just monitor within; he felt the retaliation of his own crimes were deserved, and that the ingratitude which had undone *him*, was but a poor retribution for *his* baseness to his first, best, and only friend!

Distracted by the horrid images that crowded upon his fancy, Bruyere suffering the excruciating tortures of the inquisition, till life fled from the lacerated body. His unhappy wife and children wanderers, exposed to poverty, and a thousand dreadful accidents—and that amiable woman

man sinking under her wrongs in silent anguish, her children orphans, destitute and wretched.

Such were the scenes fancy portrayed to his view, till terrified by the visions he had raised, he could no longer bear to be alone for a single moment; and having none but mercenaries about him, he was obliged to pay and promise largely, to induce a servant to be his companion, when sinking under the disorders that preyed upon his mind and body.

One day a servant entered his apartment, and told him—two gentlemen desired to see him; that being informed of his illness, and unfitness to see company, they had insisted upon his coming up with the message, and to express an earnest wish they might be admitted.

Alarmed, though he knew not why; surprised that any one should call on him, he sent for their names—The servant returned—“One of the gentlemen bid me say, that—*He is—An Old Friend, with a New Face*”—Before the Marquis could

could make a reply, the visitors had followed the servant, two gentlemen in black entered the room, and advanced to him with quick steps. He had no sooner cast his eyes on the foremost, than uttering a piercing groan, he fell senseless from his chair—'twas Monsieur Bruyere, accompanied by the Count de Sylves.

The servants, busily employed to recover their master, paid but little attention to them. Bruyere exclaimed—"Well may thy trembling soul shrink; well may life quit thy vile body, in seeing this injured face! O," continued he, looking on him, "what a loathsome, despicable wretch has vice made thee! Great God! I revere thy justice—Yet—what are his sufferings compared to the miseries he has brought on me!"

The servants heard the stranger with surprise, and soon guessed it was some person whom their master had wronged—with difficulty he was restored to life—he opened his eyes, but instantly shut them, when the same terrific object presented itself

itself to his view—He rested his head against the servant—"Tell me," he cried, every limb trembling with horror, "am I in my senses? Hide me, hide me, from his piercing eye!"

One of the servants ventured to request the strangers would withdraw. Bruyere sat fixed in his chair, his looks wild, yet terrible; the Count replied to the man—"Friend, be not uneasy, we intend no harm to you, or the base man you call master; we only come to *speak* daggers to his heart; the hand of heaven is upon him, and his body too contaminated for our revenge."

The domestics saw the gentlemen were persons of consequence, and knew they had attendants at the gate, they presumed not therefore to offend them, but supported their master in silence, wondering how this strange scene would end.

A pause of some moments ensued; for poor Bruyere, overcome by the recollection of the wrongs he had endured from the wretch before him, and his irreparable mis-

misfortune, was choaked by the violence of his emotions; at length, seeing that the conscience-stricken St. Juliers dared not to raise his head, recovering a little, he went up to him——

“ Well may’st thou hide thy head, ungrateful monster! the day of retribution is at hand—thou now feelest its approach: unprincipled villain! forgetful of benefits, unworthy of the light of heaven! know, wretch, thou hast *murdered my wife*—that angel woman, deceived, ruined, and betrayed by thy infernal arts—*she is dead!*—Her pure soul fled to heaven; where she will demand justice, where thy polluted, corrupted soul, will be called to a severe account, for all *her* wrongs and mine !”

Monsieur Bruyere, in the anguish of his mind, uttered those dreadful words in a tone so solemn, a voice so elevated, that the last word was scarcely pronounced before the wretched, appalled man again became lifeless.

The Count now persuaded Bruyere to retire ;

retire; it was with some difficulty he prevailed: for that heart, so good, generous, and compassionate, alive to the slightest sufferings of his fellow-creatures, hardened by the remembrance of his injuries, bleeding for the recent death of a beloved wife, a victim to this man's crimes, beheld with joy and exultation, with a triumph that glowed in every feature, the agonies that shook the weak, disordered frame of the wretched Marquis.

"Yes," said Bruyere, "I will go; the miserable, vile wretch, feels now at *his* heart some part of the misery he has inflicted on *mine*, and that most dreadful of all human evils, a *self-condemned, upbraiding conscience!*

To account for the sudden appearance of these gentlemen, we must look back some weeks at Lisbon, where we left Monsieur Bruyere slowly recovering from a severe illness, with a barbed arrow fixed in his bosom, that neither reason nor the affectionate assiduities of his friends were able to withdraw.

The Count de Sylves, attached to him from esteem, and from the more than common interest he had felt for his late lady, who had participated largely in the affliction of her friends, and seemed to draw consolation to himself by his endeavours to alleviate the heart-felt grief of the unhappy husband. This worthy nobleman seldom quitted him, and gratitude compelled Monsieur Bruyere to assume a resignation he did not feel, and to acquire some power over his painful emotions, that he might not distress friends to whose goodness he was so largely indebted.

Near a month had passed since the death of the amiable Madame Bruyere, when one morning Donna Elvira led Donna Violante into her closet—"I wish to consult with you," said she: "You may remember our late lamented friend mentioned a letter, addressed to me, in her cabinet, with enclosures.—One is for Monsieur, the other for your daughter, Donna Maria. A discretionary power is lodged

lodged with me, when to deliver them, or whether they shall ever be delivered at all, as you will see. This," added she, giving her a paper, "is her letter to me."

Donna Violante opened and read it, very greatly affected. In the most pathetic and grateful language, she made her acknowledgments to Donna Elvira, Violante, and Maria, for the uncommon friendship and tenderness shewn to her and her family: she confessed that she looked forward to the approach of death with pleasure; the wrongs she had suffered neither debased her mind nor stigmatized her with guilt; she had no doubt of her husband's affection and sympathy.

But every principle of her heart revolted against a re-union with him; delicacy, sensibility, decorum, in short, every feeling a virtuous and susceptible woman was capable of, pleaded against it. That conscious worth, which had taught her to think herself deserving of her husband's love, no longer existed; she could not support his affectionate looks, without

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mingled

mingled sensations of confusion and reproach: therefore, in a situation so unpromising to future happiness, she gladly welcomed the messenger of peace, that would take her from a world no longer desirable, since her only anxiety was done away, the only tie that could have dragged her thoughts to earthly concerns—the care of her dear children—no longer attached her to the world; in Donna Elvira they would have a mother, whose excellent example would illustrate every precept she inculcated.

She trusted her ever-beloved and most worthy of husbands to the affectionate care of her friends. He was young, though sorrow had robbed him of the graces of youth; not many years older than Donna Maria. She had often lately revolved in her mind, from her knowledge of that amiable lady, that if, in a decent time after her death, an union could be promoted between them, she should have a full assurance of their mutual happiness, from the goodness of their hearts: and if departed spirits were permitted to view and
be

be sensible of what passes on earth, her's would rejoice to see them united.

She added, that she had written and expressed her wishes to them both, but, trusting to her dear friend to investigate their sentiments of each other, as also the time fitting for the delivery of the letters, she presumed not to dictate any particular period, nor even any positive request, that they should be given to them at all, if, from circumstances, that must depend on the judgment of Donna Elvira, it might be supposed either party would be reluctant, or had otherwise decided for themselves.

The letter concluded with grateful blessings and wishes for her happiness proportionate to her merit.

"Now," said Donna Elvira, when she saw her friend had gone through the letter, "though it is very early days to speak on the subject, yet if such an union would meet with your approbation, we will endeavour, as delicately as possible, to make your daughter his principal comforter,

and good, affectionate hearts like theirs, will, I have no doubt, in time assimilate together: but if you have otherways disposed of her, or think she would prove inimical to our design, I shall at once give up all idea of promoting any further intimacy between them."

Donna Violante, who had conceived much esteem for Monsieur Bruyere, and was much touched with his lady's favourable opinion of her daughter, made not the smallest objection; and from that time, Maria attended her mother constantly in their visits, and was often left to mingle her tears with their afflicted friend.

As his health grew better, a strong inclination took possession of his mind to go to the castle of St. Juliers, and confront the man who had destroyed his happiness.

Bound by a solemn promise, which he dared not violate, he could not chastise, he could not exterminate the villain from the earth; but he could speak daggers to his

his soul, he could shock him by the sight of an injured man, whom he never suspected to be in existence: and to upbraid and terrify him, would be music to his troubled soul.

This idea gaining ground upon his mind, he one day mentioned it to the Count de Sylves, who instantly approved of his design, and offered to accompany him.

“As you cannot, with safety, travel in your own name,” said he, “you shall assume that of Don Sebastian de Sylves, my relation. We will go; I shall enjoy the confusion of the villain: and we will take care to guard against his machinations, by going to the monastery at Salines, where two of the fathers, if alive, are friends to the Count de Vassy—with him we may have a safe asylum for the short time we remain there.

This scheme determined on, it was astonishing what an effect it had upon the spirits and health of Monsieur. The ladies were surprised, and extremely repug-

nant to a plan that had no purpose to answer, and might possibly lead to danger; they dreaded the villainy of the Marquis; they feared that sudden passion and revenge might render Monsieur Bruyere forgetful of the vow so solemnly given to his lady. These, and many other objections were started to impede their design taking place; but the gentlemen were too determined to recede. Donna Violante and her daughter remonstrated warmly with the Count.

“ You take up the business on a wrong ground,” said he; “ be assured Monsieur Bruyere never will, never shall have any rencounter with the Marquis; I pledge my honour, and my life, to you for his safety. The idea, once in his head, nothing is capable of diverting him from it; he will be easier when he returns. The voyage and journey will do us both good, and you shall have cause to rejoice that we have undertaken it.”

Willing and active minds had soon every thing in readiness; Monsieur Bruyere

were felt some affectionate struggles to part with his children, but they were in safe hands, and he checked the emotions that gave a temporary reluctance to leave them.

He embraced the ladies; and observing tears trembling in the eyes of Donna Maria, he kissed her hand a second time, "Charming sensibility!—amiable young lady! continue to love my Henrietta, think sometimes of a man too much obliged for words to express, and believe this grateful heart remains warmly attached to its friends, till we meet again."

To travel with the gentlemen is unnecessary; they arrived in safety at Salines, and alighting at an inn, their first enquiry was, "If the Marquis St. Juliers was then at his castle?" They were answered in the affirmative, with the information of his ill state of health, and such particulars of his embarrassments, and family history respecting his "*two wives*," as were gossiped about the neighbourhood; all which

they drew from the man by dint of enquiry in a careless manner.

It is very natural to conclude, that Monsieur felt an unusual degree of satisfaction when he learnt the miserable state of his detestable, false friend; he was impatient to see him, but the Count prevailed on him to enquire first after his old acquaintance the Count de Vassy, to whom Monsieur Bruyere was indebted for his deliverance and life, and through whose recommendations his much-regretted lady had been introduced to those friends who had soothed her last hours by the tenderest affection.

Proceeding to the monastery, they had the satisfaction to hear the worthy Count was alive, and in tolerable health; it was yet but noon-day, and they soon had a carriage to convey them to the foot of Mount Jura, and having prevailed on one of the good fathers to accompany them, they were not long in ascending the mountain, and reaching the hermitage.

Mon-

Monfieur Bruyere feized his friend's arm—"Ah!" cried he, mournfully, "this then is the spot where that ever-dear injured woman fled from the worft of villains! methinks every ftep I tread is hallowed by the recollection.—Bleffed fpirit!" he apoftrophifed—"Bleffed fpirit! look down and fee thy faithful husband, thus venerating thy virtues, thus lamenting thy premature death, in the very spot where thou foundeft an afylum and a friend!"

Oppreffed and fpiritless, he followed their guide to the mouth of the cavern; the father entered, and was defired to announce the Count de Sylves from Lifbon. In a few minutes he returned to conduct them.

They defcended a flight of eafy fteps, cut out of the rock, and then going through a fhort narrow paffage, quite dark, they came to a fmall platform that had two openings; one led to a more fpacious fort of room, which had three openings; they paffed through a very narrow aperture, then, turning to the

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right,

right, ascended a few steps, and found themselves in a commodious kind of room, lighted by two lamps, and pretty decently furnished.

Here the Count de Vassy came to meet them. Many years had elapsed since he had been in Portugal, and the Count de Sylves was then a very young man, not more than eighteen, yet he recollected his face (he said), and clasped him to his arms.

But age, sorrow, habit, and his long seclusion, had produced such a wonderful change in de Vassy, that the Count de Sylves could not trace a single feature like the man he had once known at his brother-in law's.

He returned his embrace however, and then turning to present Bruyere, whose mind at that moment underwent the most painful agitations, "I present to you my friend," said the Count de Sylves; "an unfortunate man, prepared to esteem you for essential services rendered to the most respectable, and most lamented of women.

This

This is the husband of the late Madame Bruyere."

"How!" cried the Count de Vaffy, starting back, "is that amiable woman dead?—And is this her unfortunate husband?" "Alas! yes," answered Monsieur Bruyere passionately, "you see that most miserable of men.—O, Count!" said he, falling on his neck, "my angel-wife rescued me from death, and fell a victim herself!"

All present were deeply affected; and some time past before the sad particulars could be repeated. At length, when a little more composed, Monsieur mentioned his intention of seeing St. Juliers the next morning; and the Count de Vaffy having heard from the monks of the dreadful state the poor wretch was in, was under no apprehensions of ill consequences to them from the interview; and he owned St. Juliers well deserved the punishments that had befallen him, and the additional one of seeing the man on earth that must strike

strike him with the most heart-rending torture.

Having promised to repeat their visit, they took leave; and Monsieur Bruyere, on their return, expressed something like a wish to pass the remainder of his life in the cavern with the Count de Vaffy:—" Shall he do more for a mistress than I for a wife?" he asked. " *Has he children?*" replied the Count, coolly. Bruyere embraced his friend, tears springing to his eyes—" Enough, you have convinced me—I have yet duties to acquit myself of to them, and to the departed saint that left those sacred pledges of her love."

The next morning they proceeded to the castle, attended by two servants well armed; and the consequences of their unexpected appearance have been already related. We shall now, therefore, resume the story where we left the miserable St. Juliers in convulsive fits; the Count de Sylves having prevailed on Monsieur Bruyere to leave him.

Some

Some hours past before this wretched man was restored to reason, if reason it could be called, when conscience raised the most horrible visions to his view, and a deprivation of thought or reflection would have been a blessing.

He called on Madame Bruyere, accused himself of having murdered her, then ordered his servants to shut him up, to hide him from the bloody daggers of her husband. In short, the servants were compelled to send for a physician, and he was ordered to bed, dangerously ill.

The fever, which encreased with much rapidity, turned his disorder to the-black jaundice; which, with the appearances that attended it, gave no hope of his life. The following day, his senses seemed perfectly restored, but his mind laboured under the most horrible oppression. He enquired of the doctor if he was in danger, the gentleman frankly told him he certainly was.

His agonies were dreadful for some hours; at length he grew more composed,
and

and sent for a notary, also to Salines to enquire out Monsieur Bruyere. As he was unknown there by that name, the servant would have had a fruitless errand, had he not accidentally met with the gentlemen in the street; he acquainted them with the state in which his master lay, and delivered the message.

“No,” said Monsieur Bruyere, “I will see him no more; I cannot forgive him: whilst he lives I hate and detest him as the worst of villains. Heaven may have mercy on him, I presume not to set limits to Almighty goodness, but here, while he exists on earth, I cannot forgive him, therefore I will not see him. Tell him to make his peace with Heaven if he can.”

Finding no persuasions could induce Monsieur Bruyere to go to the castle, the Count proposed going himself; to this the other did not object. “I would go,” said he, “to glut my revenge, and see his dying agonies, but if the wretch solicited forgiveness, my soul would recoil,
but

I never

I never could accord it; therefore, I will not see him.—Do as you please.—I own I feel an exulting triumph in his sufferings.”

The Count proceeded to the castle, while Bruyere, whose natural goodness and humanity was scarcely equalled, and never exceeded, felt on this occasion a callosity of heart, that, knowing the extent of his wrongs, we know not how to condemn.

When the Count arrived at the castle, he was met by the notary, “Ah! Sir,” said he, “if you are the gentleman that was sent for, you have no time to lose, the poor Marquis has not many hours to live.”

He was conducted to the apartment where the dying man lay; such an object of equal disgust and terror, that the Count felt some repugnance to approach him. “Where is Monsieur Bruyere?” asked he, wildly. “He cannot come to you,” replied the Count; “the sight of you again he is not able to support.”

“Then

"Then he will not forgive me, he dooms me to perdition, to everlasting misery!"

"*He* can neither save nor pronounce your doom: Heaven is merciful to the repentant sinner, *there* must rest your hopes. What you have to say, speak to *me*, I will convey your wishes to him."

"Tell him, then, that I feel I have been the worst of villains; that I ever deceived and imposed upon him; not one spark of gratitude dwelt in my bosom, I gloried in the wrongs I did him. I have been to him, and to that angel who is now shutting the gates of mercy against me——

"Yes, see!" he exclaimed, "there, robed in white, she stands, with a flaming torch, to prevent my entrance.—O, mercy! mercy!—behold that fury, that base wife of mine; see, she laughs, she gnashes her teeth—she comes upon me with a two-edged sword!—Save me!—save me!"

He attempted to throw himself out of bed,

bed, the physician and servant struggled with him; he shrieked once or twice, then gasped for breath, and as they replaced him in the bed, was seized with a convulsion, in which he expired!!

The Count was inexpressibly shocked at the sudden and deplorable end of this wretched man; turning to the physician, "I presume," said he, "that my presence here is now unnecessary; if the Marquis has any relations or friends, they ought to be sent for."

"I know of none," answered he; "but his will, made a few hours ago, which I heard read, as a party concerned, and which is to be opened by Monsieur Bruyere, according to the directions on it, will explain every thing."

The will lay on the table, sealed up; the Count saw it was directed to his friend: "The unhappy man," continued the physician, "hoped to have delivered it to the gentleman himself; I should think he ought to be sent for."

After pausing a moment, the Count
asked

asked if the doctor would permit him to take it to his friend? "You have heard enough, Sir," said he, "to comprehend that the unhappy object before us had deeply wronged Monsieur Bruyere, and I know he will feel much repugnance to interfere in his concerns; I will, however, see what can be done; perhaps were you to accompany me, it might have some effect on him."

"I shall attend you with pleasure," replied the doctor; who, giving a few orders to the servants, promised he would return shortly, and till then, *no one* was to be admitted into the house. His motive for this order arose from hearing that Monsieur Corthouse had been discovered to be in the neighbourhood; and he concluded, that having heard the situation of the Marquis, he was lurking about to wait the event, and if he died, to take possession of the castle in right of his daughter.

The two gentlemen found Monsieur at the inn, his countenance spoke the anguish

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of his mind ; he was surprised to see a stranger with his friend. The business was soon explained to him ; and the death of the wretched St. Juliers gave him a variety of painful emotions :—" He is gone, then," cried he, lifting his eyes and hands to heaven ; " would to God he had died twelve months sooner, he would have been less guilty, and I should not have endured the miseries he has heaped upon me ! but the will of God be done.—Poor wretch ! I once loved him like a brother, my confidence and friendship were unbounded—What blessings were turned to curses by a wicked mind ! and now an early grave closes the scene for ever !!"

He threw his handkerchief over his face ; they respected the sorrow that drew tears from his eyes by the recollection of past afflictions, and were silent till he recovered from the temporary distress of his feelings ; and then, resuming the subject, produced the will—" Open it," said he to the Count, " I can have nothing to do

do with it." It was opened; the contents were very short, and simply these:

He cut his wife off from any part of his property, but what was attached to her settlement; he appointed the physician and Monsieur Bruyere executors; and, after all legal demands were settled, he bequeathed the remainder of his estates in Lisbon to the children of Monsieur and the late Madame Bruyere, adding these words:

"In the name of that God I have so grievously offended, I implore Monsieur Bruyere to forgive all the crimes I have been guilty of; and if he wishes peace to the soul of a despairing wretch, that he will permit his children to possess those estates, once the property of a good man like himself, unworthily bestowed on me.

"All I have remaining of my once immense fortune I bequeath to them, except two hundred livres to Monsieur de Peltier, my physician, and three hundred to the Countess Dulay, who a few weeks since applied for that sum, to pay for her
admit-

admittance and support in a convent; she is unhappy, poor, and she says, repentant; she was an associate in my wicked designs, therefore I hated her; but now, if she lives and is repentant, I envy her; she is at Besançon. The castle St. Juliers belongs to the vile woman whom I married; the furniture, plate, and every moveable article, goes to my executors, for the purpose of paying my debts.

“ Pray for me much injured Bruyere, and let my wretched end be a warning, a fearful example of the short career of wickedness, and the just punishment of treachery and base ingratitude !!! ”

Monsieur Bruyere heard the above read, with great agitation: he shook his head, “ *my* children enjoy estates bequeathed by the destroyer of their mother! No, no, cried he,” warmly, “ I will have nothing to do with them.”

“ Then *I must, Sir,*” answered the physician, “ I understand from the Count, they are young, *you* have no right to renounce their property, if *you* refuse to act,

act, I shall request this gentleman to join with me as their guardians; for I hold it a sacred duty to see this will fulfilled."

"Then, Sir," replied Bruyere, "use your own pleasure, for I solemnly declare, I *will* not, I *can* not, take any part in the business; and if my children hereafter possess my sentiments, they will renounce every advantage that may be derived from the bequest."

The gentlemen saw it was not a time to dispute the point, with a mind smarting under a sense of recent injuries, and therefore took the whole management on themselves, and by the advice of the Count, Monsieur Bruyere passed most of his time, while he was otherwise engaged, with the Count de Vassy.

As the physician expected, Monsieur Corthouse appeared to demand possession of the castle and estate attached to it; which, after the funeral and disposal of the effects, was given up to him, but he was horribly disappointed in finding an empty house.

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For this purpose she had applied to the Marquis; whether he had the inclination then to assist her we know not, but he certainly at that time had not the ability. The physician empowered her to receive the money from a friend of his, and by the Count's desire, mentioned to her the

death of Madame Bruyere, and the deplorable end of the Marquis.

By the active exertions of the two gentlemen, the purposes of the will were soon settled, and every thing concluded to their satisfaction. Nothing now remained to detain them in France, where the Count did not think Monsieur quite safe; should the malicious Corthouse know of his proscription; the day was fixed for their departure, and a wish to draw the Count de Vassy from his solitude, was the only thing they had in view.

The two friends urged him with every argument they could deduce from reason, every persuasion friendship could suggest; he remained immovable. "I love you," said he, "I will pray for your happiness, but nothing shall draw me from this country; I have, however, consented to forsake the cavern, and reside henceforth in the monastery; there I shall wait with submission to Heaven for the happy day that will reunite me to my dear, my fainted Clara!"

Finding

Finding it impossible to shake his resolution, the friends took a most affectionate leave of him, and left France with pleasure, and with sentiments very different from those that occupied their minds on landing there. The Count confessed that he had decided with himself to revenge the injuries of his friends; bound by no vows, without wife or children, he resolved to run the chance of punishing St. Juliers, or to perish in the attempt: Heaven had happily prevented the rash intention.

Monsieur Bruyere having seen his wrongs retaliated, by the decrees of Providence, upon his base enemy, and his vengeance satiated in the tomb; no longer felt those turbulent emotions that had so painfully disturbed his breast; he bowed to the justice of Heaven that had made him an instrument of punishment, by conducting him to witness the dreadful consequences of vice, and a wounded conscience.

When they landed at Lisbon, a thousand pleasurable sensations sprung to their hearts, as they hastened to meet their much loved friends.

friends. Never was joy more sincere than was expressed by all parties; and when the late circumstances were related, all joined in adoring the righteous retribution of Providence.

The Count de Sylves strongly attached to Monsieur Bruyere, so earnestly entreated him to reside constantly with him, that it was impossible to decline the wishes of so warm a friend. His lovely children, whom he found well and happy, it was agreed on should thus be disposed of.

Henry was to be sent to the College at Evora for education; Henrietta, on whom Elvira absolutely doated, was not to be separated from her, but to have masters in every branch of education fit to accomplish a young person of fashion. Monsieur Bruyere and the Count were to divide their time equally among them. But the former generally secluded himself hours in the day to indulge in reflection on past happiness, and lament with unceasing regret the cruel reverse, and the loss of a woman whose virtues and graces were equalled

equalled by very few, and surpassed by none.

Time, which is said to soften and subdue the poignancy of affliction, did but little for him; and he often imposed a painful restraint upon himself in mixing with the society his friends thought requisite to divert his mind.

Donna Maria, with the tenderest sympathy, partook in his sorrows, and his most agreeable moments were passed in her company. But, 'tis said, grief is contagious, and whilst this amiable lady was assiduous in her endeavours to alleviate his, she caught the infection, and it was soon observed she was plunging into the deepest melancholy.

Every one was affected by the visible alteration in her spirits and health; Donna Elvira easily divined the cause, though she effectually concealed it from her mother.

"I think," said the former lady, one day to Violante, "'tis time now to get some insight into the sentiments of Mon-

seur Bruyere and your daughter—Madame Bruyere has been dead near twelve months; lately Donna Maria and Monsieur have been much together, he gives a decided preference to her company.”

“Alas!” answered Violante, “I have a thousand apprehensions for her health; I know you think her attached to Monsieur, but all the measures I have taken to learn her sentiments, prove to me that nothing is farther from her thoughts than a *passion* for him.”

“And yet,” said Elvira, “you may mistake, leave the management to me, I will soon understand of what nature her sentiments are;” the other readily acquiesced, and that same day an opportunity occurred that Elvira and Donna Maria were together alone.

The former talked of Monsieur; “I am concerned,” said she, “at the melancholy that still pervades his heart; his loss is great indeed, but ’tis irreparable, and the submission he owes to Heaven, should teach him to struggle against a constant
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repining to the decrees of Providence. He is such an amiable man that I wish from my heart he could meet with a woman deserving of his attachment."

Maria blushed scarlet deep; "Ah! Madame," said she, "he will never love another; few, indeed, are there to be found deserving to succeed such a charming woman as the late Madame; it would be presumptuous in any woman of common merit to desire it."

"Yet, it was the fervent wish of our dear departed friend, that her husband should marry, and there was *one* whom she wished to be the happy woman."

"Good God!" cried Donna Maria, trembling, "I never heard of this before; may I ask, do you know the lady alluded to?" "I do," replied Donna Elvira, "and though he is at present unconscious of his lady's wishes, he appears to me to prefer that lady in a *friendly* way, beyond any other. Can you understand who I mean?"

"I will not be disingenuous," answered

she, much agitated, "I believe you mean myself; but indeed, my dear Madame, he has no sentiments but those of a brotherly friendship for me—but is it possible," added she, blushing, and looking down, "is it true that Madame Bruyere could mention me as worthy of her husband's love?"

"Yes," said Elvira, embracing her, "you shall see the letters; I have discovered more than one secret to day; but fear not, your pride and delicacy shall be duly attended to, only follow my directions, and my life for it, all our wishes will be answered."

From that moment Donna Maria exerted all her powers to please; if Monsieur was sorrowful, she sympathized with him; if cheerful, she would play, sing, and entertain him in the most agreeable manner possible: her voice was very fine, her person truly pleasing and interesting. It was impossible to be long insensible to her attractive powers and earnest wishes to please.

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By degrees he grew more cheerful, he walked and talked with Maria for hours; he dwelt on the charms of his late wife, she joined in doing justice to them; she praised her excellencies with fervor; he called her a dear, judicious, generous girl; and in short, soon knew no other pleasure than what her company afforded him.

Donna Elvira permitted things to go on, without seeming to observe them, for many weeks, the Count de Sylves was let into the secret, and when Elvira supposed she might venture to open the negotiation, she one day took Monsieur into her closet, (Madame Bruyere having then been translated to Heaven sixteen months) after some preparatory discourse, she delivered to him the posthumous letters to him and herself; requested he would consider the sacred wish of the dead with reverence, and if he could comply, without pain or repugnance, she offered her interest to effect so desirable an event to all parties.

She left him more than an hour, and finding he was still in the closet, she

ventured to go in. His countenance and eyes shewed how much he had been affected; he rose and embraced her; "Yes, Madame," said he, "if Donna Maria will condescend to accept of a bankrupt heart, I will comply with the wishes of my angel wife, I will offer myself to her acceptance; her virtues and sweet disposition will heal the wounds that rankle in my bosom, she only is worthy to succeed the saint I have lost, though I acknowledge myself every way unworthy of her."

'Tis needless to say that Donna Elvira was rejoiced, and was entrusted by him to prepare his address to Donna Maria; every circumstance was managed with much delicacy, and in a few weeks after this conversation, Monsieur Bruyere was united to the deserving Donna Maria, and in the calm sweets of that union found a balm that healed his wounded mind. Madame Bruyere was remembered and talked of with affection and regret by both; and though his love for Maria was
not

not of that passionate nature which he had felt for his Louisa, yet it was tender, affectionate, and respectful, to the end of their lives. All their friends partook in their felicity, and enjoyed the pleasing delights of love and friendship.

Henry and his lovely sister grew up universally admired and loved, she was the counterpart of her angelic mother; at an early age they both married into the first families in Lisbon, and their happiness was proportionate to their deserts, and the wishes of their friends.

Donna Elvira, Donna Violante, (whose son returned to her soon after the marriage of Maria) and the Count de Sylves, formed a trio in emulation, who most should love, and promote the happiness of their young friends; their affection was ever gratefully returned.

Monsieur Bruyere never failed to inculcate the important lesson to his children and grand children, "To be guarded and diffident in their juvenile attachments; never to contract friendships in early life,

without the sanction of more experienced persons, capable of investigating characters; and distinguishing between the blandishments of art and self-interest; and that ingenuous frankness of character that marks an upright mind. Convinced," he said, "that improper connections, and unworthy examples, too often imperceptibly instilled such poisonous lessons into the unsuspecting mind, as stamped the colour of their future days with misery and repentance; and that in the world, where vice, ingenious to disguise itself, assumes a thousand seducing forms to play on the innocent, and guileless heart; it is above all things requisite, that the most happy dispositions should be enlightened by experience, to prevent the ill consequences too generally attendant on juvenile friendships, without virtue for their basis. *To such early indiscretion,*" concluded he, *"I owe the severest misfortune, and the bitterest hours of my life."*

It now only remains for us to speak of the

the inferior characters introduced into this work.

The unworthy and abandoned Marchioness St. Juliers, who resided with the Prince de Soubise, very soon was guilty of such excesses, that the Prince chose to withdraw his protection, and leave her to her fate.

As she was handsome, and in fashion, she had plenty of gallants who administered to her vices and extravagancies; in the full career of which she lived, sometimes indeed obliged to be indebted to her dear papa; who proud of his lady daughter, sacrificed to her without scruple, the chief part of the *trifling* sums he had secured for himself.

At length they learnt the dangerous state of the Marquis, and Monsieur Courthouse, ever provident, set off in haste to attend his last hour. We have seen that he was disappointed by a will cutting off his daughter; and that he had possession only of the estate previously settled on her. When informed of the manner in which
the

the Marquis had disposed of his remaining fortune, she was outrageous; but passion availed nothing, and she was forced to bear what was past remedy. The estates of St. Juliers were quickly disposed of, and the sums they produced were not long in dissipating by her unbounded extravagance.

Distresses, deservedly incurred by the vicious life she had given herself up to, at length overtook her, when her charms were impaired by excesses, and grown too common to attract admiration. Whilst the father had any thing remaining, he liberally supplied her, in the hope that she might yet obtain some other establishment; when she was absolutely driven to the greatest necessity, a Venetian gentleman returning to his own country, condescended to take her in his suite.

She was not in a situation to make terms, and quickly accepted his unconditional offer; leaving her worthless parent to want and misery among strangers, and without the least remorse, gave him up to
the

the punishment he had well deserved for the baseness of his conduct; though the infliction of it ought not to have proceeded from her.

To prolong a wretched existence, he submitted to the lowest and most servile employments, more degrading than his original occupation, and at length died in obscurity and want. His vicious and unnatural daughter, experienced many painful vicissitudes in the infamous line she pursued, and her life terminated at an early age among the lowest dregs of the people at Venice.

The Countess Dulay, who had lost all her hereditary fortune by gambling, and engaged in intrigue to supply her purse, we have seen became the coadjutor of St. Juliers in all his wicked and deceptive plans. Disappointed in the views she had formed, by his sudden passion for Mademoiselle Corthouse, she made the discoveries to Madame Bruyere more out of pique and resentment, than from real contrition; though she certainly felt some remorse

remorse for her crimes when she saw her situation.

On leaving the castle she returned to Besançon, where she resumed her former follies, and sought in dissipation to lose the recollection of the crimes she had engaged in; after various changes of fortune, she found herself stripped of every resource, and attacked by a severe disorder that long held her life in a doubtful balance.

In this miserable state, a retrospection on her past life obtruded upon her in all the horrors concomitant with a sense of guilt and self-reproach; she vowed, if Heaven spared her life, to devote the remainder of her days to penitence. In this frame of mind she applied to the Marquis for part of that sum he had once promised her to be an assistant in his schemes.

This money he was unable to give, from the want occasioned by his own vices and prodigality.

At his death, we have seen, he remembered her, and the money was remitted for her

her use. The information that accompanied it, the death of the innocent, and much injured Madame Bruyere, and the terrible closing scene of the Marquis, shocked her inexpressibly, and from that hour she deprecated her own wickedness, and bitterly repented the irregularity of her conduct.

She retired into a religious house, but the pain of self-reproach, and the disorder which still hung about her, produced a decline, that in eight months after her entrance there, terminated a life that, during the time last mentioned, had been strictly devoted to penitence and prayer.

The Chevalier Serac and his sister were such common contemptible characters, as are daily seen fluttering about, devoted to fashion and dissipation; neither nice in their choice of company, nor scrupulous in their manner of obtaining amusement, so that they could gain it in any form; and as such people were necessary now and then to crowd a room, or oblige their friends by a hundred little services, they

continued to hover about the circles of fashion, and seek entertainment wherever it could be found.

Monfieur le Grand, continued a flatterer, a parasite, to the end of his life; affuming any form or shape to answer the purposes of those who condescended to associate with him, and made him subservient to their pleasures, whilst they despised him: the certain fate of those who meanly sacrifice integrity and honour to flatter the vices of their superiors.

To draw any moral, or inferences from this work, would be to insult the understandings of our readers. The most important lesson Monsieur Bruyere has deduced from his own misfortunes, for the benefit of *his* children, and which ought early to be impressed on the minds of all young people. We have seen, however, that though virtue and innocence may be sometimes the victims to vice and duplicity; the triumph of the latter is short, the punishment certain and terrible.

THE END.

